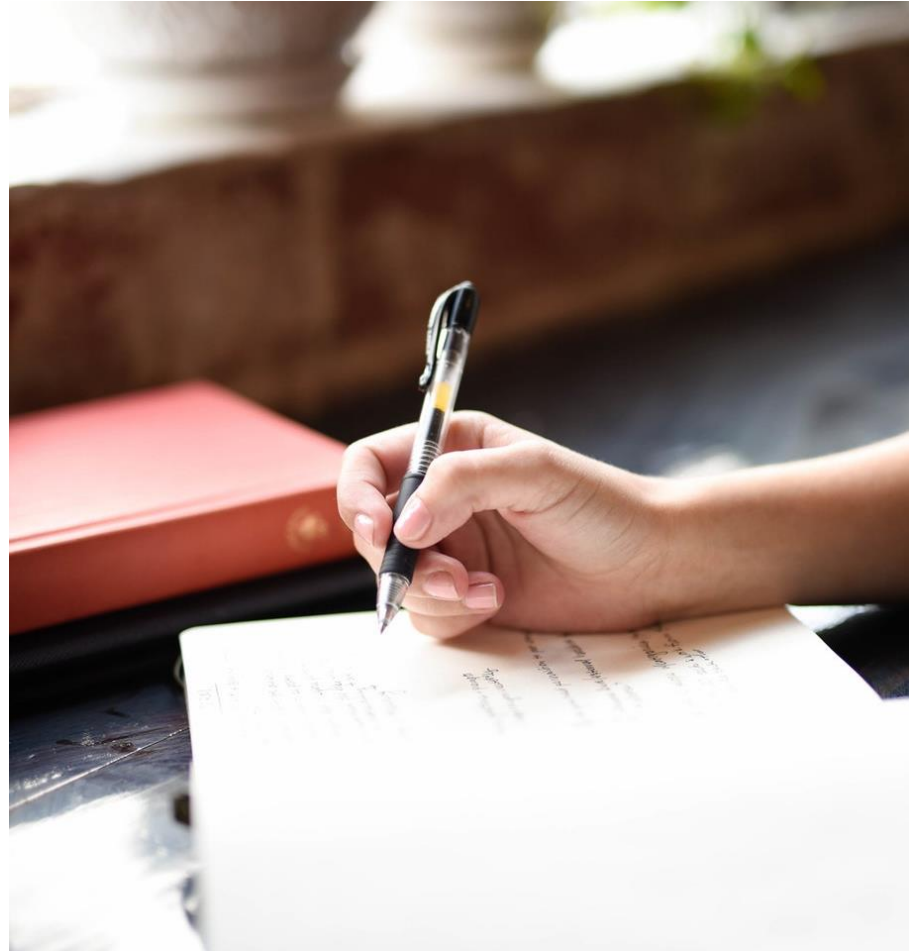


Academic Style Week 9





What is a
POWERFUL
ESSAY?

P
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W
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Y



What is a POWERFUL ESSAY?

PRECISE

Organised/objective

W

E

R

F

U

L

E

S

S

A

YOUR OWN WORK

A
Powerful
Essay
is

- Precise
 - Objective
 - Well-presented
 - Edited/proofread
 - Referenced
 - Formal
 - Uses caution
 - Linked
 - Explicit
 - Structured
 - Supported
 - Analytical
 - Your own work
-

Academic Writing is...

Precise

Objective

Well-presented

Edited / proofread

Referenced

Formal

Use caution

Linked

Explicit

Structured

Supported

Analytical

Your own work

So how can I make MY writing more ACADEMIC?

Use language accurately, be exact with figures, pay attention to detail

Be open-minded, fair and unemotional in your approach – avoid I, YOU and WE

Make sure it looks professional – check your module handbook for guidelines

Leave time to read through, re-order, change parts, add ideas, correct grammar

Ensure all ideas from books / journals have references. Add reference list

Avoid slang / jargon. Use more sophisticated vocabulary. Do not abbreviate

Do not make over-generalisations. Things are rarely black and white

Use connecting words / phrases to show your reader how ideas are related

Always be clear, avoid vague statements and vocabulary

Write in paragraphs – one main idea per paragraph – think carefully about order

Include examples and evidence - paraphrased, quoted, summarised ideas

Break down issues into component parts – show how they are related

Be original. NEVER copy someone's work – student or author – it is plagiarism!

Do you
think this
is written
in a
suitable
academic
style?

How to work harder is a topic that lots of people have written about in the last few years. There are lots of different theories etc and I think some of them are ok. When we think about this we should remember the old Chinese proverb, that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. So how do we increase production? Its quite a complex subject but we'll just talk about a couple of ideas.

The problems can be summed up briefly as:

Vocabulary – imprecise

Language being too informal

Language being too personal

Use of proverbs or similar fixed expressions

Use of rhetorical questions

Use of contractions

Academic Writing

Full forms

There is...
The research did not

Impersonal

This essay will analyse

Use of the passive voice –

In the last decade, important research has
been published...

Concise Language

Government expenditure..

Formal Words –

A considerable amount of money..

Non-academic Writing

Contractions

There's
The research didn't

Personal

In my essay, I will analyse

Use of active voice -

In the last decade, researchers have
published important...

Informal Language

The way a government spends
money..

Informal words –

A lot of cash...

Academic writing V non-academic

Guidelines



- Do not use idiomatic or colloquial vocabulary e.g. lots of, boss
- Use vocabulary accurately e.g. rules/laws, Explicit/ implicit weather/climate, economic/economics, Principal/principle.
- Be precise when talking figures; if no precise figures are available use approximately
- Conclusions should use tentative language. Avoid absolute statements e.g. ‘it is the worst case of plagiarism in recorded history’ could more cautiously be written as ‘it might be the worst case of plagiarism in recorded history’.

- 
-
- Avoid adverbs that show a personal attitude e.g. luckily, remarkably, surprisingly.
 - No to contracted forms e.g. don't = use 'do not' 'can not' 'is not' etc.
 - To show examples, use 'such as' or 'for instance' not 'like'
 - Instead of 'thing, nothing, something' be specific or use 'factor, issue, topic'.
 - Instead of 'lots of', use 'a significant/considerable number'
 - Instead of 'little/big' use 'small/large'
 - Do not use 'get' , there is always an appropriate word!

- No rhetorical questions e.g. 'Why was the sub-prime mortgage crisis allowed to happen?' instead use statements e.g. there are three main reasons for the sub-prime mortgage crisis
- When writing lists, avoid the use of 'etc' and 'and so on' Instead insert '**and**' before the last item on the list e.g. the main products were gold, silver and copper.
- Avoid phrasal verbs e.g. 'go up', 'go on'. Use 'increase' or 'continue'



...so how
can this be
improved?

How to work harder is a topic that lots of people have written about in the last few years. There are lots of different theories etc and I think some of them are ok. When we think about this we should remember the old Chinese proverb, that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. So how do we increase production? Its quite a complex subject but we'll just talk about a couple of ideas.

Motivation has been the subject of numerous studies during recent decades, but this essay will focus on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (1966). Their contemporary relevance to the need to motivate employees effectively will be examined critically, given that this can be considered crucial to a firm's survival in the current economic climate.



**This is a
mixture
of formal
and
informal..**

When a company goes bankrupt, there are liabilities such as accounts payable to creditors, employees' wages and the resulting increase in unemployment. Insurance companies and the banks have to take action to fix their side of the problem in regards to the company's losses. So who is ultimately responsible for the liabilities?



Informal elements:

Use of everyday language: goes bankrupt, take action, to fix

Rhetorical questions: so who is...?

Use of strong arguments (have to)

Formal elements:

Nominalisation: unemployment, losses, liabilities, increase

Specialist language: liability

Better version...

Many liabilities result from bankruptcy of a company, for instance, payment of creditors, employees' wages and increase in unemployment. The issue of who is responsible for these liabilities is highly debatable but is usually resolved by insurance companies and banks. However, the company's role in the matter must not be ignored.

Moving from the informal to the formal



When editing your university assignments, you should also check your work for its level of formality.



This is not just a matter of pinpointing and removing all the personal pronouns such as *I*, *we*, rhetorical questions, colloquial language etc.



When shifting your work from an informal style to a more formal one, you often need to change the distribution of information at sentence level, and perhaps reorganise the whole paragraph.



Example: Consider the following sentence which could introduce a conclusion

In conclusion, in this essay I have argued that multiculturalism is good for economic development.

In conclusion, in this essay it is argued that multiculturalism is beneficial for economic development.

How can we avoid using “*it is argued*”?

Avoiding:
“It is
argued”

Either:

- The argument that multiculturalism is beneficial for economic development has focused on ... (followed by a list of the main arguments in the essay).

Or:

- *The benefits of multiculturalism for economic development are in the areas of ...*



Informal



Formal

Example:

She said it wasn't good enough.

- It was said that it was unsatisfactory.
- It was stated that it was not satisfactory.
- The inadequacy of it was highlighted

*Academic
writing
often uses
language
that is
cautious
or
tentative.*

Main forms:

- **Modal verbs** – may, might, would, can, could
- **Lexical verbs** – seem, appear, suggest, indicate, assume, believe
- **Modal adverbs** – perhaps, probably, possibly, apparently
- **Modal adjectives** – probable, possible, (un)certain
- **Modal nouns** – assumption, claim, evidence, estimate, possibility

Examples:

- It appears to/that
- It would appear to/that
- It seems to/that
- It would seem to/that
- It tends to be
- There is a tendency to/for
- Some of the evidence shows that
- It has been suggested that
- It is widely accepted that
- It is generally agreed that (strong)
- It is generally recognised that (strong)
- It is (very) doubtful if/that...



Other Verbs:

- Assume
- Imply
- Believe
- Estimate
- Indicate
- Reveal

Examples:

- James (2012) estimates that...
- It is implied by James (2012) that...

Examples



- A survey has shown that lecturers use the terms 'seminars' and 'tutorials' interchangeably.
- A survey has shown that many lecturers seem to use the terms 'seminars' and 'tutorials' interchangeably.

EVERYTHING I KNOW IN LIFE I LEARNED
FROM F.R.I.E.N.D.S



**ACCORDING TO THE THESAURUS,
"THEY'RE HUMID, PREPOSSESSING
HOMOSAPIENS WITH FULL SIZED AORTIC
PUMPS" MEANS "THEY'RE WARM, NICE
PEOPLE WITH BIG HEARTS."**

- Make the thesaurus your best friend!
- <http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus>

