

ACE Quick Guide to Writing Concisely

An element of a good paragraph is **concision**. As you have roughly 200-250 words in each paragraph to make your point, provide workplace evidence, relate theory to practice, analyse and evaluate the importance of this, and link to the next paragraph, you must be mindful of this limitation. To **maximise** the **value** of your **limited word count**, try the following strategies.

1. Limit the amount of background information provided

You should only tell readers what they need to know to **understand** and **appreciate** your **critical analysis**. An early version of your assignment might contain a substantial amount of background information, but you should ensure that with each draft you are **removing details** which **do not contribute** to the **argument** being constructed. In the example below, only the multinational nature of the organisation is being analysed to directly answer the assignment question, and so the remaining background information can be removed.

Original: ~~Company X was founded in 1917 by two brothers in Dayton, Ohio and grew from this small family-run business to eventually employ 45,000 workers across 17 countries, including Country A, Country B and Country C .~~

Revision: Managing a multinational organisation such as Company X, leaders should be conscious of wide-ranging cultural differences and apply different leadership styles accordingly (Author X, 2024).

2. Use topic sentences and refer back to these when writing

You should begin each paragraph by **clearly and succinctly indicating what the paragraph will explore**. This will not only help the reader navigate your assignment but will also ensure you **do not veer off track** if you return to this topic sentence. Following the example topic sentence below, the reader will anticipate the remainder of the paragraph to explore IoT devices in more detail or expand on the concepts of 'autonomous operation, sustainable values and self-optimisation'. If this is not the case, the argument may be veering off topic and lacking concision.

Example: Smart Internet of Things (IoT) devices allow managers and researchers to overcome old ways of doing business, thereby ensuring autonomous operation, sustainable values and self-optimisation.

3. Avoid repetition and redundancy

You should edit each paragraph carefully and **cross out** any **words or phrases**, or even **sentences** that are **unnecessary**. Reading your work out loud slowly can be a useful approach for recognising redundant or clunky phrasing but always be careful to ensure you **do not lose anything essential**. In the example below, the revision allows the writer to regain three words without sacrificing meaning. If done consistently throughout the assignment, a **larger percentage of words** will be devoted to **critical analysis** and **evaluation of theory and practice**, which will maximise the grade received.

Original: ~~There were~~ 30 participants ~~who~~ volunteered for the post-meeting survey (Appendix A).

Revision: 30 participants volunteered for the post-meeting survey (Appendix A).

(Adapted from Walden University, 2024)

4. Edit mercilessly!

You should not confuse writing academically with using an artificial overly-wordy style. Use the **simplest language possible** to make your points. If you can exchange a five-word phrase for a two-word equivalent, you should do so. While the Original below may at first glance appear more 'academic' than the Revision, the Revision is better as it is **clearer, easier to understand** and **more concise**.

Original: 85% of employees at Organisation X testified to a penchant for meetings comprising a maximum solitary hour in duration (Appendix B), for facilitation and optimisation of oft-lacking communal partaking and the efficacious assimilation of freshly acquired information (Author X, 2024).

Revision: 85% of employees at Organisation X reported preferring meetings under one hour (Appendix B), to enhance engagement and the retention of new information (Author X, 2024).

Reference List

Sestino, A. et al. (2020) 'Internet of Things and Big Data as enablers for business digitalization strategies', *Technovation*, 98, pp. 1-10. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7417898/pdf/main.pdf> (Accessed: 12 December 2024).

Walden University (2024) *Writing Concisely*. Available at: <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/scholarlyvoice/writingconcisely> (Accessed: 13 December 2024).

Additional Resources

The [ACE Critical Writing: Building an Argument Quick Guide](#) provides an in-depth guide to academic paragraph structure with a demonstration of the TEEEL method.

The [ACE Quick Guide to Use of Sources](#) explores how to synthesise source material into an academic argument and contains a phrase bank for engaging with scholarly ideas.

The [ACE Introductions and Conclusions Quick Guide](#) offers advice on what information to include in your introduction and conclusion respectively.

The [ACE Quick Guide to Paraphrasing](#) demonstrates different ways of engaging with scholarly arguments in your writing.



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