

Business Writing Advice

I met with a recruiter for Veolia Environmental, North America Corp. to discuss his experiences with business writing. He emphasized four important aspects from his experience: understand your audience, be concise, and always improve.

Understanding the Audience

He sometimes has to communicate sensitive topics with others through email and needs to be sure he's clear without offending his audience. Tell them what's going to happen instead of letting them figure it out. Be very clear. He must be sure that what he writes isn't personal but still conveys the problem that needs to be addressed if there are issues that need to be changed. Simply changing a few words can completely change the tone of an email. A tip he gives in regards to this is to write "here's the issue," instead of "you're the problem."

Be Concise

Write the purpose of the piece in a short, professional manner. Be thorough but don't ramble. Veolia Environmental is an international company based in France. When the North American offices receive memos from Paris, they are written in both French and English; however, the English is poorly translated. This could lead to difficulties but the messages are written concisely so the purpose is conveyed in spite of the choppy translation. If they were not, it would be extremely difficult for readers to understand the purpose.

Always Improve

Writing is a trade that demands improvement. He believes that you need to know how well you write in order to know how to improve. If you're not confident, there's nothing wrong with having someone check it or simply asking for help. Catch errors in your writing through proof reading and having others proof read. Don't forget to use spell-check. He was asked by his boss to send an email to one of the CFO's at Veolia. He was instructed with what needed to be conveyed and he sent his boss a draft before sending the final copy to the CFO.

Finding a job in today's market is not an easy task but a little persistence and finely tuned writing skills will help you find employment.