Business Writing Reminders

Sentence Faults

When connecting two independent clauses (groups of words that could be sentences if standing alone) to form a sentence, avoid these sentence faults.

Run-on or fused sentence (no punctuation between the clauses)
> Robert has worked in sales for five years Mary has worked in product development for seven.

Comma Splice (incorrectly placing a comma between the clauses)
> Robert has worked in sales for five years, Mary has worked in product development for seven.

Correct options
- Robert has worked in sales for five years, and Mary has worked in product development for seven. ***(Place a coordinating conjunction after the comma)***
- Robert has worked in sales for five years; Mary has worked in product development for seven. ***(Use a semicolon)***
- Robert has worked in sales for five years. Mary has worked in product development for seven. ***(Separate into two sentences)***
- Robert has worked in sales for five years; however, Mary has worked in product development for seven. ***(Use a conjunctive adverb with a semicolon and comma)***

See page 453 of your textbook for more information on sentence faults.

Lists

When introducing a list, use a colon (:) only if the statement introducing the list is a complete thought. Do not use a colon after a verb or a preposition.

Incorrect: Send this to: Accounting, Shipping, and Purchasing.
Correct: Send this to the following departments: Accounting, Shipping, and Purchasing.

Incorrect: Please call: Juan, Jean, and Sean.
Correct: Please call these department heads: Juan, Jean, and Mary.

Parallelism
When writing a series of items in a sentence or in a list, make all of the items follow the same grammatical structure. Check for this by noticing if the first word of each item is the same part of speech (a noun, a verb, an adjective, etc.)

Incorrect: She must complete her homework, shop for a birthday present, and her car must be washed.
Correct: She must complete her homework, shop for a birthday present, and wash her car.

See page 454 of your textbook for more information on parallelism.

Numbers
Generally spell out numbers one to nine and use numerals for numbers 10 and up.
See page 462 of your textbook for more information on numbers.

I/Me
Always capitalize the word "I."
Incorrect: Tell the boss that i have completed the project.
Correct: Tell the boss that I have completed the project.

Always put yourself last when using a compound subject or object.
Incorrect: Me and Ed went to the training session.
Correct: Ed and I went to the training session.
Incorrect: The boss promoted me and Yvonne.
Correct: The boss promoted Yvonne and me.

Texting-based Career Killers
Never use texting shortcuts such as 4 (for) and u (you).
Always use proper capitalization and punctuation.

Concise Writing

Delete Unneeded Words and Sentences
This is to inform you…
I am writing this letter…
My name is…
I would like to tell you…

Shorten Long Words or Phrases

Instead of this:	Use this:
We are of the opinion that	We think
Please feel free to	Please
At this point in time	Now
Despite the fact that	Although

Wordy: We don't, as a general rule, cash personal checks.
Improved: We don't generally cash personal checks.

Eliminate Redundant Words

-- true facts   -- past history
-- first and foremost   -- refer back
-- advance warning   -- thought and consideration
-- new beginning   -- filled to capacity

Avoid Fillers
A sentence that begins with <u>it</u>, <u>here</u>, or <u>there</u> is probably wordy.

Wordy: There is a banquet room at the Hilton that seats 500.
Improved: A banquet room at the Hilton seats 500.

Wordy: It is a hotel that is centrally located and has excellent facilities.
Improved: The centrally located hotel has excellent facilities.