

The Policy Guide Book

Writing Techniques for Policy Professionals

By Melissa Goertzen

POLICY WRITING

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

What is Concise Writing?

The Writing Process

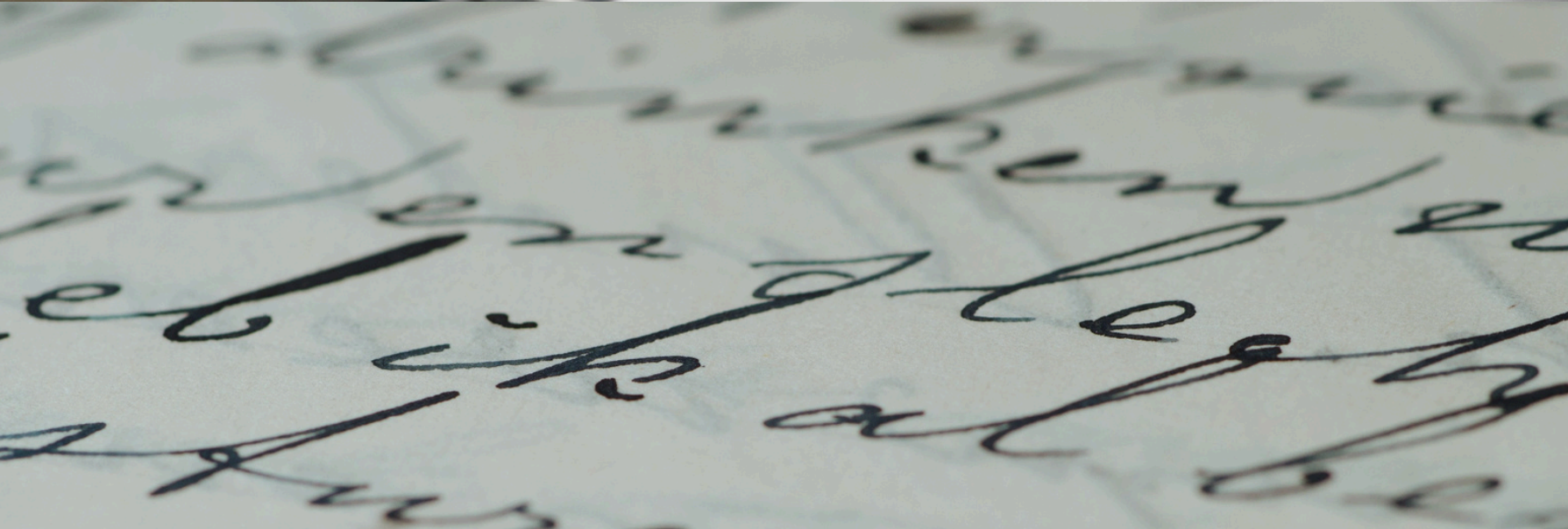
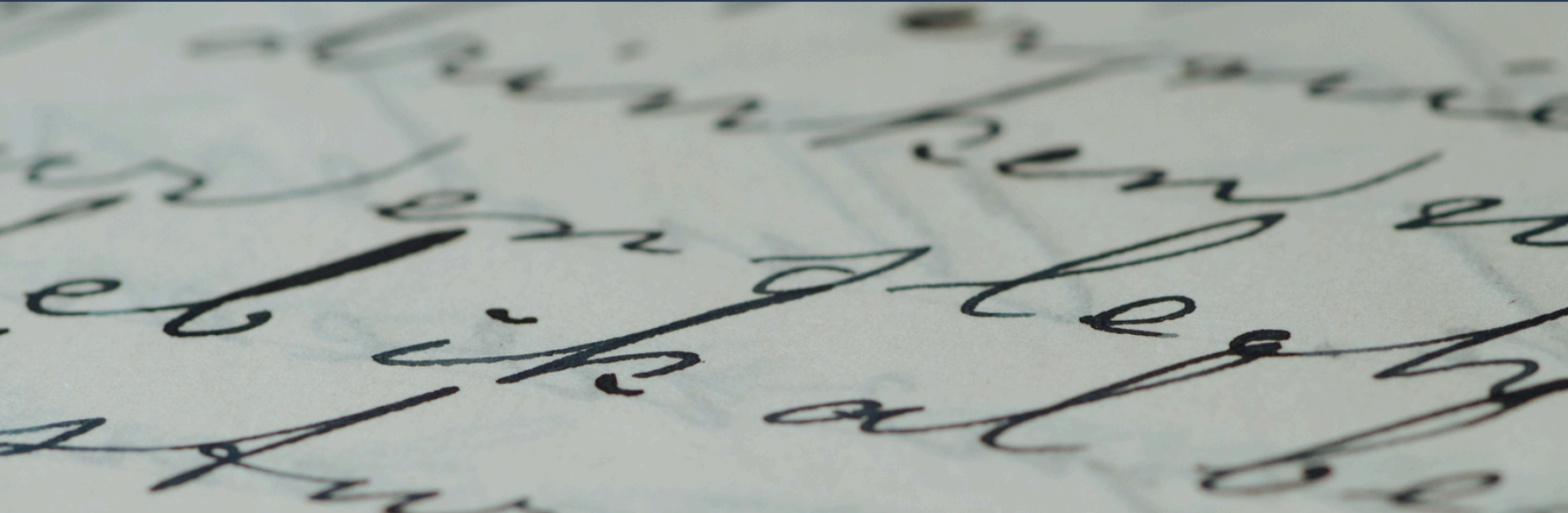
Outlines and Templates

Craft Sentences and Paragraphs

Review Language Choices

The Policy Writing Guidebook

WHAT IS CONCISE WRITING?



WRITING TECHNIQUE

Concise writers focus on deliberate word choices, sentence construction and grammar. Sentences are crafted to clearly communicate substantive information to readers.

PURPOSE

The goal is to avoid verbosity, not reduce word count. Verbose writing contains redundant phrases, technical vocabulary or unnessecary words.

WORD SELECTION

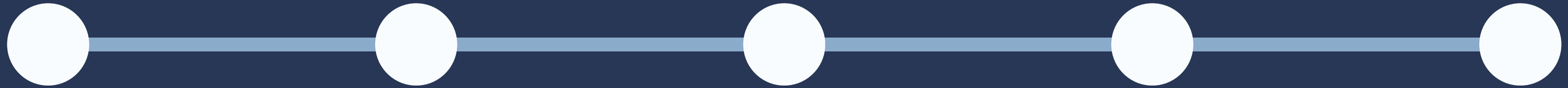
Concise writers select words with a purpose. The vocabulary is accessible to all audience members.

WRITING TIP

CONCISE WRITING BEGINS BEFORE
WORDS ARE PUT ON THE PAGE.

TO COMMUNICATE CLEAR IDEAS TO THE AUDIENCE,
THE WRITER MUST CRAFT THE MESSAGE FIRST.

THE WRITING PROCESS



SELECT A FRAMEWORK

Policy templates published in the Management Guides provide standardized frameworks for cabinet submissions.

IDENTIFY THE AUDIENCE

What does the audience know about the topic? What information do they require? How will the information be used by the audience?

EXPLAIN ONE IDEA AT A TIME

To support reader comprehension, write short paragraphs that focus on one idea.

EDIT, EDIT, AND EDIT AGAIN

Critically review each sentence and paragraph. Cut or revise text that is irrelevant or unclear.

READ TEXT OUT LOUD

Read drafts out loud to flag unnecessary words or phrases.

OUTLINES AND TEMPLATES

THE 100 MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Outlines are the most powerful tool in a writer's toolkit. They allow the writer to build a framework, organize information and insert evidence that supports the policy request.

Templates for cabinet submissions are available in the 100 Management Guide. They set writing and research standards for all provincial government departments.





CRAFT SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

AVOID THE PASSIVE VOICE

Passive writing is not grammatically incorrect, but does create wordy sentences.

LIMIT SENTENCES TO 40 WORDS

Long sentences lead to misunderstanding. Communication is more efficient when sentences are compact.

LIMIT PARAGRAPHS TO 300 WORDS

Think of paragraphs as single units of information. Focus on one idea in each paragraph. Organize all paragraphs on the page so they tell one cohesive story.



EDITING STRATEGIES

- Start sentences with the subject
- Make deliberate word choices
- Use plain language
- Replace vague words with specific words
- Use the short form of words and phrases
- Roundabout expressions vs. direct expressions
- Replace multiple negatives with affirmatives
- Eliminate excessive detail

THE POLICY WRITING GUIDEBOOK

The Policy **Guide Book**



Writing Techniques for
Policy Analysts

By Melissa Goertzen

WRITING AND GRAMMAR TIPS

- Cabinet submission templates
- Outline suggestions
- Editing tips

EMAIL TEMPLATES

- Cabinet submission review requests
- Cabinet submission signature requests

ATTESTATION STATEMENT TEMPLATE

- E-signature approval for cabinet submissions



THANK YOU

Please reach out with any questions or requests.
I am happy to be of assistance!

