

WRITING TIPS FOR UNIQUE SPIRITS

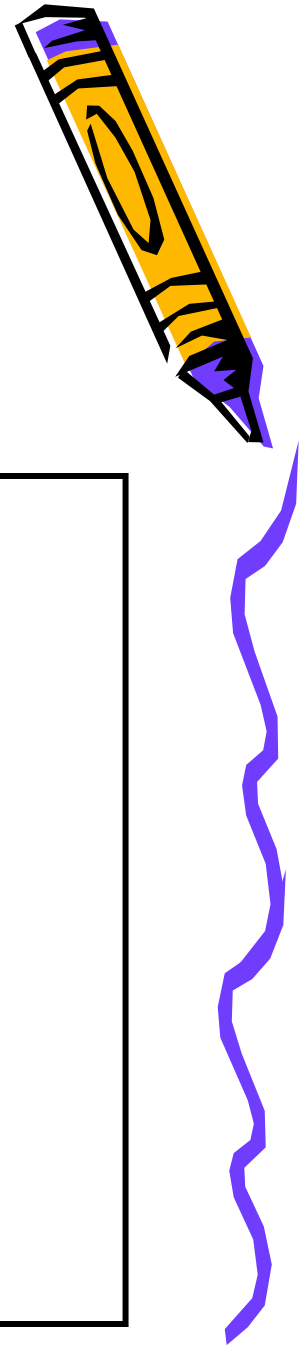
NWACUHO 2006
Spokane, WA



Terri Tower
Oregon State University

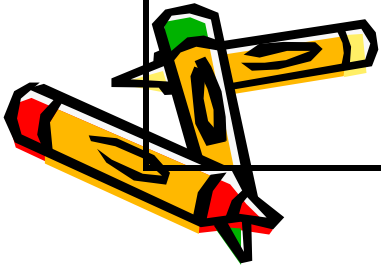
February 19-22, 2006

TWO TIPS TO TAKE HOME



• (1)

• (2)



UNIQUE SPIRITS

Terri's Red Pen Pointers

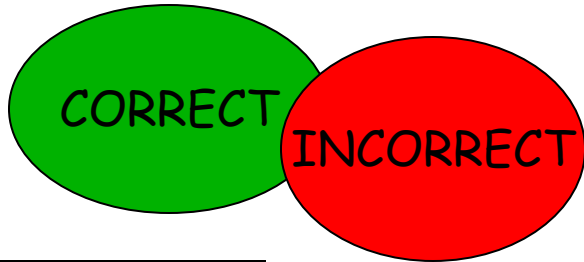
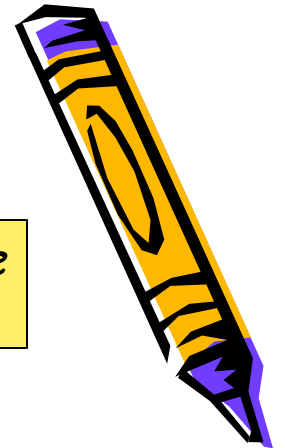


Presenter's bias...sometimes
in a comma.



BUSINESS WRITING

Writing is not the same as talking.

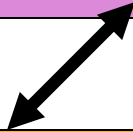


Grammar

Spelling

Punctuation

EFFECTIVE



NOT EFFECTIVE

Style

Format

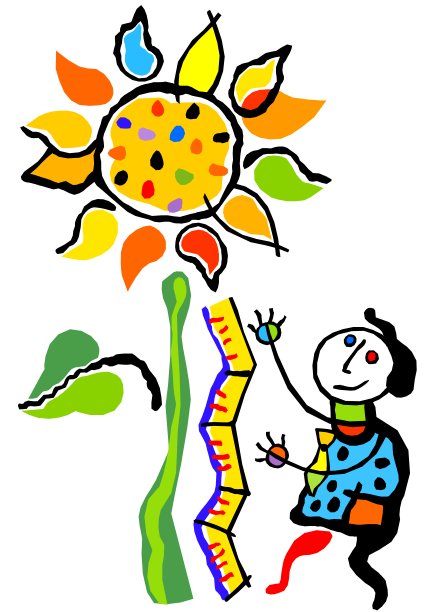
Usage

Word Choice



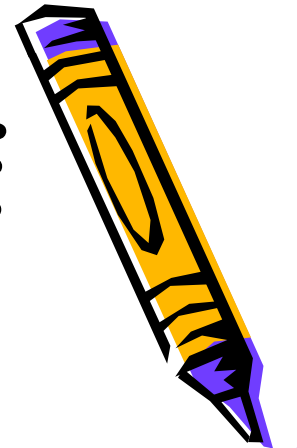
MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

- BE CLEAR
- BE CONCISE
- BE COMPLETE
- BE CONSISTENT
- BE COURTEOUS



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- How many people are going to read this?
- Who are they?
- What's important to them?
- How well do you know them?
- What's the purpose of your message?
- Is this ever going to be part of a legal or policy challenge?



PUNCTUATION

THE
COLON:

THE
SEMICOLON;

- SEPARATION
- PAUSE
- INTERRUPTION
- SET APART
- LISTS
- GET READY

THE COMMA,

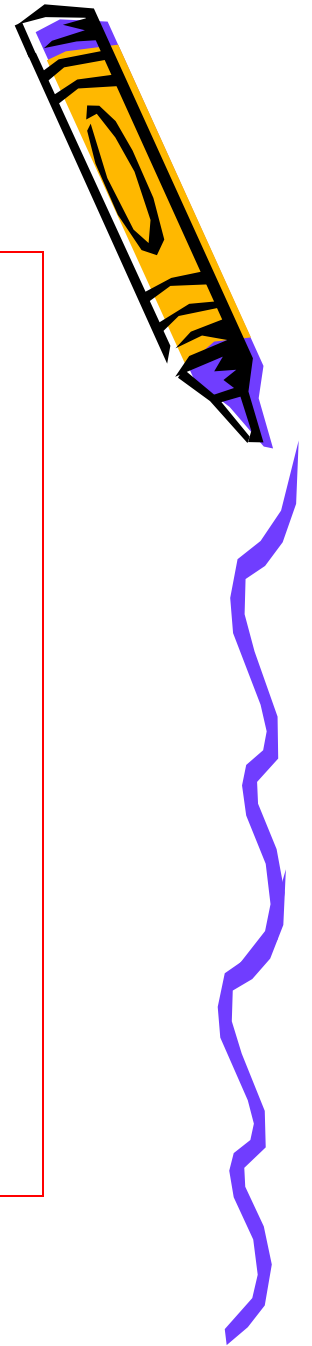
When in doubt, don't.



EXAMPLE - FROM VISION STATEMENT

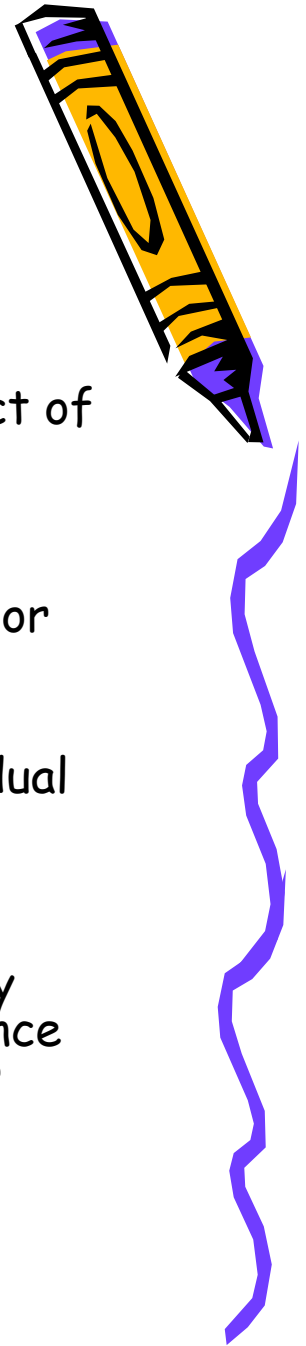
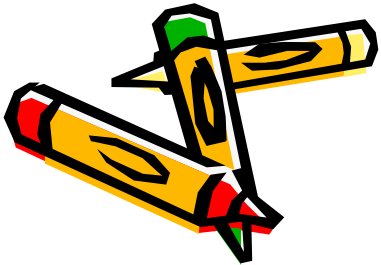
Consequently, the University will:

1. Provide high quality disciplinary, professional, and interdisciplinary programs in which stakeholder constituents, including students and various 'publics', are meaningfully engaged.
2. Accelerate the development of excellence in five thematic areas: arts and sciences; biosciences and health; atmosphere, earth, and ocean systems; engineering and technology; and natural resources.
3. Attract and retain students of the highest quality and potential, and be recognized for excellence in providing a nurturing, challenging, and supportive environment for the student experience.



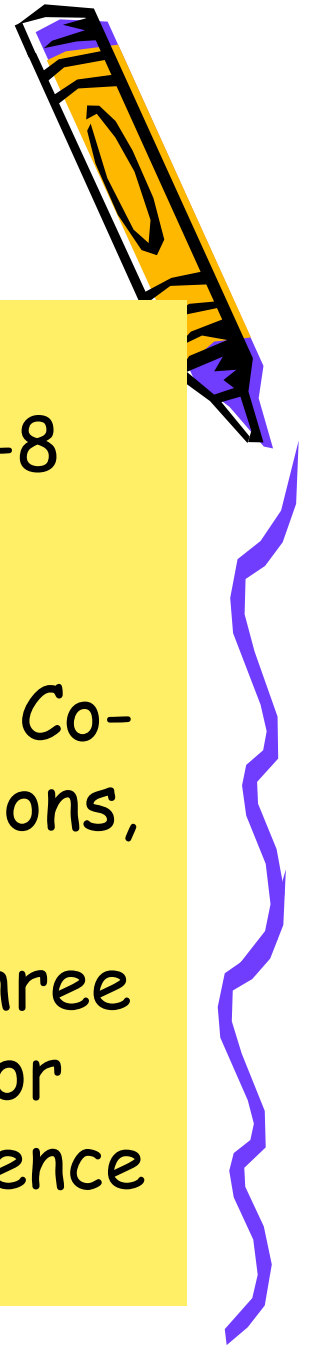
EXAMPLE - FROM POLICY STATEMENT

- Sexual harassment is defined as: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when:
 - A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
 - B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education-related decisions affecting such an individual, or;
 - C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.



PRACTICE - From Position Announcement

The duties and responsibilities of this position include supervision of staff (3-8 professionals and up to 50 students), support of a compelling learning environment in the Residence Halls and Co-ops, Student Conduct, Summer Operations, and on-call duties. These positions will have collateral assignments in one of three areas; coordination of staff selection, or coordination of staff training, or residence halls summer operations manager.



POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS



1. The duties and responsibilities of this position include: supervision of staff; support for compelling learning environments in the residence halls and cooperative houses; management of student conduct; coordination of summer operations; and coverage of on-call duties.
2. These positions will have collateral assignments in one of three areas: (1) Coordination of staff selection; (2) Coordination of staff training; or (3) Management of summer operations in the residence halls.
3. The duties and responsibilities of this position include staff supervision, learning environment support, student conduct, summer operations, and on-call duties.



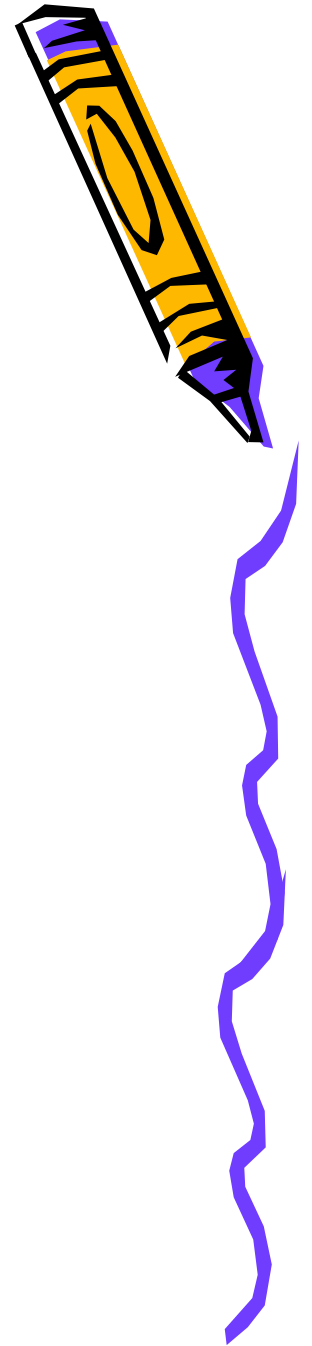
MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

CAPITALIZATION - When in doubt, don't. Be consistent.

PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION - Use variety for leading words. Maintain consistency in word form or phrase structure. Remember that more isn't necessarily merrier, especially if listed as narrative instead of bullets.

COMMAS - Think of hiccups. Minimize use to what's essential for clarity.

PREPOSITIONS AT END OF SENTENCE
Consider emphasis and effect, informal or formal tone.





PESKY PRONOUNS

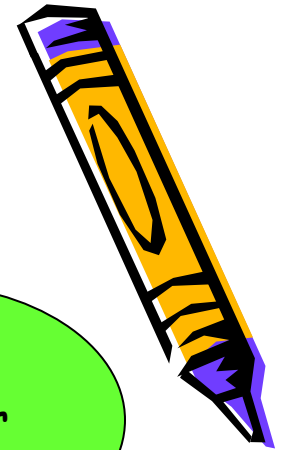
AGREEMENT

ANTECEDENTS

SINGULAR
and
PLURAL



BASIC RULE: A pronoun must agree with its antecedent - the word for which the pronoun stands - in number, gender and person.



Examples:

Dan said that he could do the job alone.

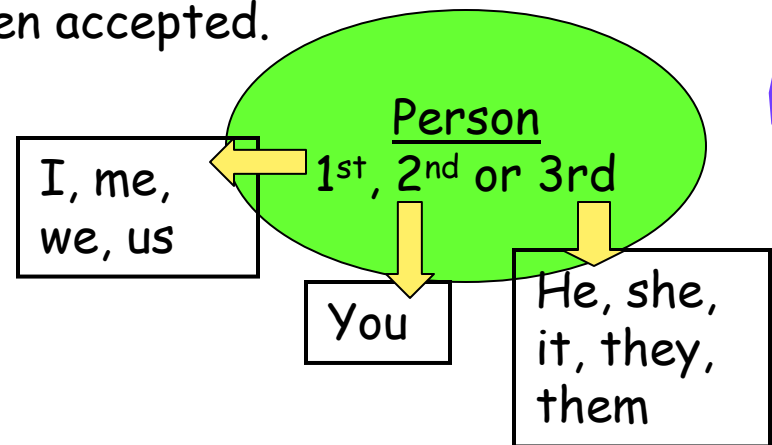
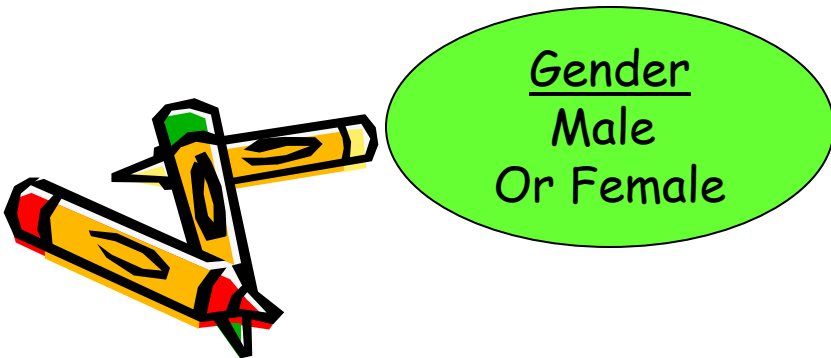
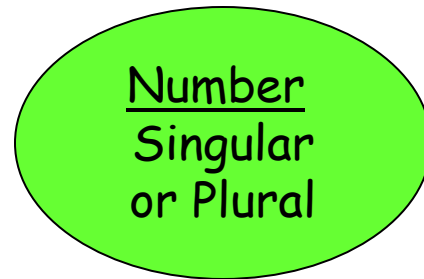
Most parents want their children to attend college.

The department's auditors will issue their report tomorrow.

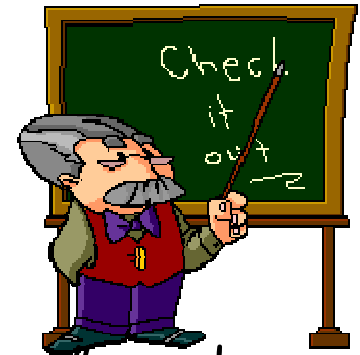
The grand jury will issue its decision tomorrow.

I must stand by my beliefs, just as you must stand by yours.

Timi wants to know if her proposal has been accepted.



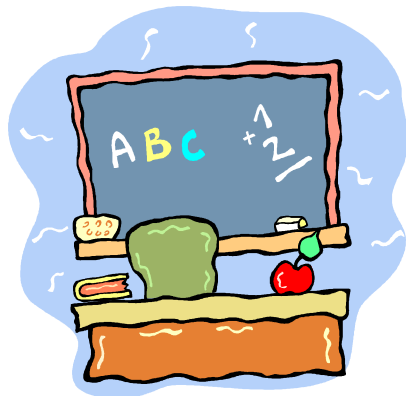
COMMON GENDER ANTECEDENTS - What to do with "he" and "she".



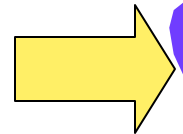
Nouns that apply to both males and females have a "common" gender, or are "gender inclusive".

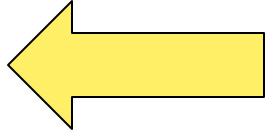
For example:

Parent	Doctor	Boss	Writer
Child	Lawyer	Supervisor	Speaker
Customer	Professor	Employee	Listener
Manager	Instructor	Student	Consultant



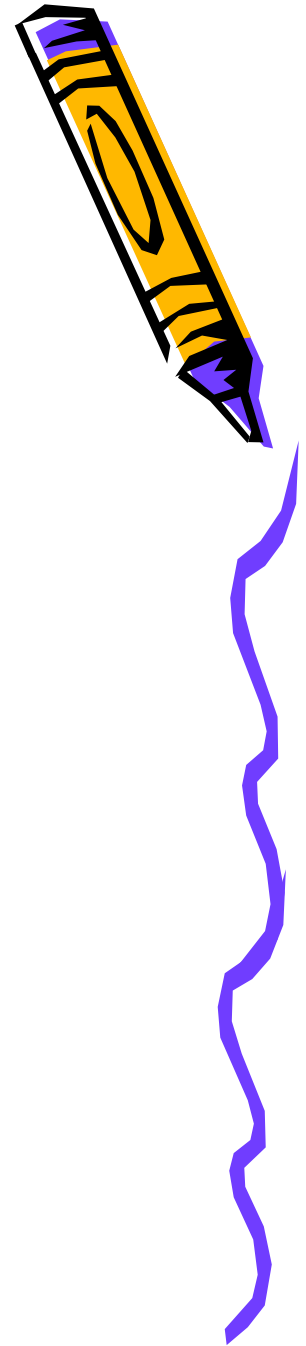
When a singular noun of common gender serves a definite antecedent (one that names a specific person who is known), use the pronoun "he" or "she", as appropriate.





When a singular noun of common gender serves as an indefinite antecedent or as a generic antecedent, consider your pronoun options:

1. Former usage - the dark ages. Style deferred to masculine "he", "him", etc. unless typically a group where women predominated, e.g. secretary, nurse, teacher, in which "she", "her", etc. were used. [Bleh]
2. Modern usage - the enlightened ages. Style is inclusive, as in "his or her", "he and she". Hyphen or slash style of he/she, his/her, s/he, is awkward - okay informally, but not advised for more official use.
3. Contemporary usage - the clever ages. Reword to avoid generic pronoun, or change the wording from singular to plural.



EXAMPLES: Generic nouns and gender inclusive pronouns.

1. The parent of a teenage child often wonders where he or she went wrong.

Change to: Parents of teenage children often wonder where they went wrong.

2. When a customer calls, ask him or her to leave his or her phone number.

Change to: When a customer calls, be sure to ask for a phone number.

3. An office assistant tries to anticipate the needs of his or her boss.

Change to: An office assistant tries to anticipate the needs of the boss.



PONDEROUS PRONOUNS



INDEFINITE PRONOUNS SINGULAR - these are always singular and require singular verbs and pronouns.

Anyone	Everyone	Someone	No one
Anybody	Everybody	Something	Nobody
Anything	Everything	Somebody	Nothing
Each	Every	Either	One
Each one	Many a	Neither	Another

EXAMPLES:

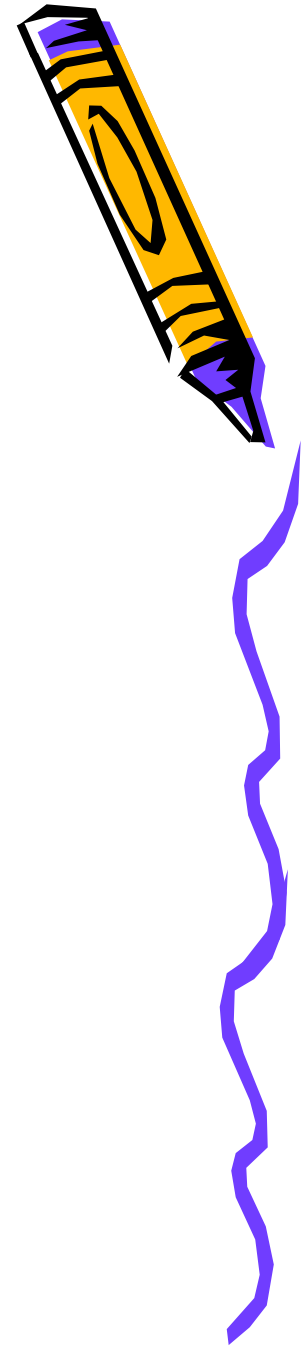
• Everyone on the RA staff is [are] required to submit his or her [their] program summaries.

RA's are required to submit their program summaries.

Nobody wants his or her [their] writing used as a bad example.



MORE PRONOUN PONDERINGS



INDEFINITE PRONOUNS PLURAL - these pronouns are always plural and require plural verbs and pronouns.

Many Few Several Others Both

EXAMPLES:

- A few of the directors have not yet taken their vacations.
- Many of our customers prefer to help themselves; others usually like to have a salesperson wait on them.
- Several of the staff members try to be patient with the whims of their hall director. The others on staff just roll their eyes and groan.





INDEFINITE PRONOUNS BOTH - yee hah, these pronouns can be either singular or plural, depending on the noun to which they refer.

All None Any Some More Most

EXAMPLES:

- Most of the students arrive on time and bring their laptops.
- Most of this cheese has to be thrown away because it has mold on it.
- Some of the employees have not yet picked up their paychecks.
- Some of the manuscript has been typed, but it has not been proofread



THE POWER OF PRONOUNS

Your choice communicates a message - intended or not.



INCLUSION

We
Our
Us

EXCLUSION

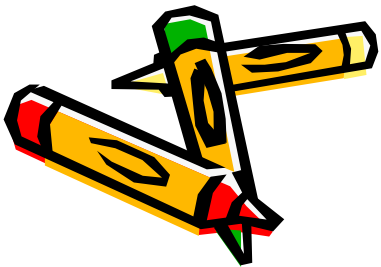
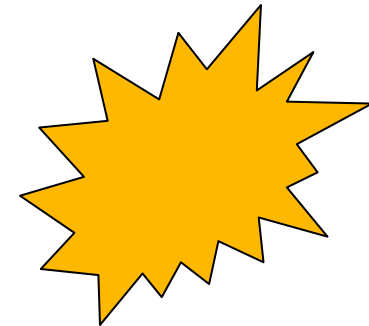
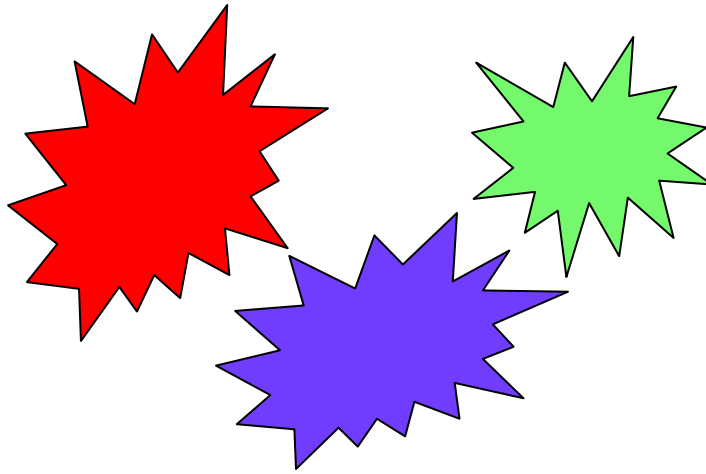
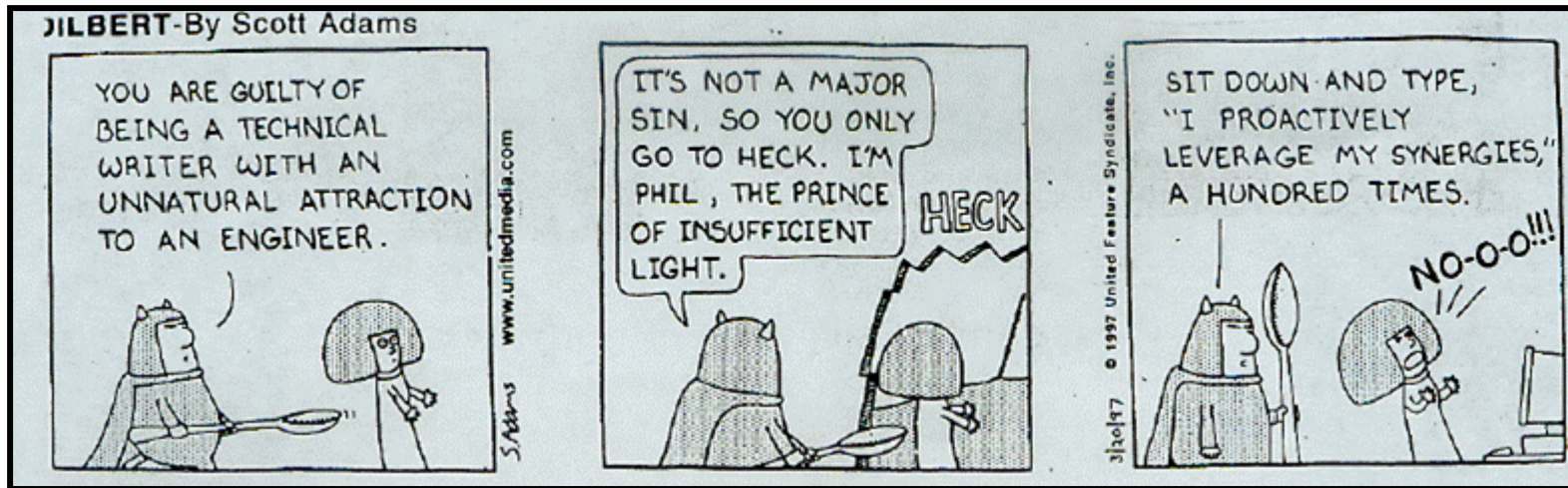
You
Your
They
Them
Those

ACCOUNTABILITY

I
My
Me
Mine



WORD CHOICE AND USAGE



OCCASIONAL IMPEDIMENTS TO UNDERSTANDING



- VERBICIDE - 1. deliberate distortion of the sense of a word (as in punning). 2. one who distorts the sense of a word.
- VERBIFY - to make into a verb.
- HYPERBOLE - excess, exaggeration, inflated importance.



VERBING GAME

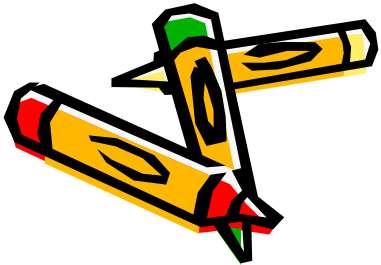


DILBERT — By Scott Adams



AWARENESS OF THE CRINGE FACTOR

- Why bother?
- Language sensitivity.
- Audience tunes out content.
- Lose message.
- Other?
- Other?
- Other?



E-MAIL's

Verbal Versatility

- Informal or formal
- Conversation or correspondence
- Purpose
- Audience
- Humor
- Substitute for memos, letters, references, meeting or conversation summaries



Other?

Other?

Other?

