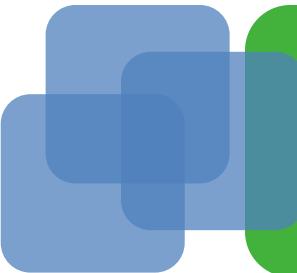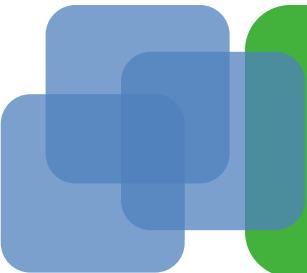**2**

Getting Started: Planning and Writing Business Messages
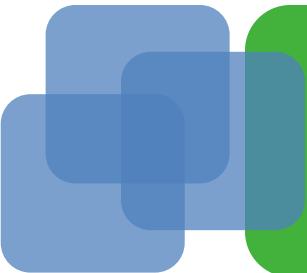
Introduction

- Key concepts

- Steps in the writing process
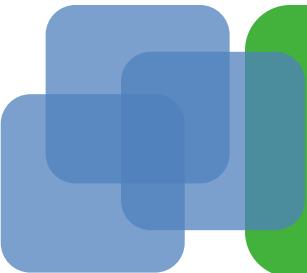
- Collaborative writing

- Critiquing

Writing in Context: Four Key Concepts

- Context
  - What is the task?

- Genre
  - What type of writing?

- Discourse community
  - To whom are you speaking?

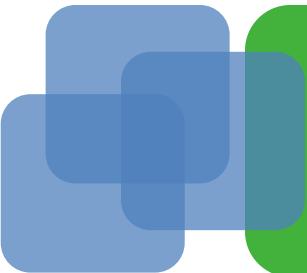- Rhetorical situation
  - How do you want them to respond?

Steps in the Writing Process

- Planning

- Pre-writing

- Organizing and creating an outline

- Drafting
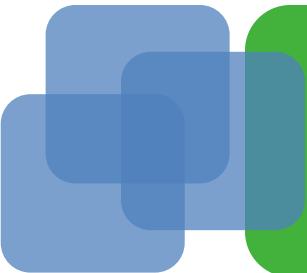
- Revising and editing

Message Planning

- Business communication is
  - purpose-driven
 - audience-focused
  - concise

Prewriting

- Before writing:
  - Identify the purpose
  - Estimate the scope
  - Consider the audience's needs
  - Select a communication channel
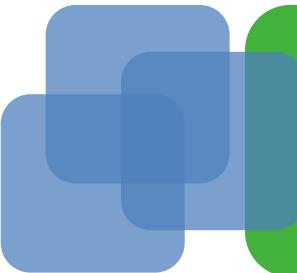 - Collect the information

Purpose

- In business, you may communicate to
    - request or provide information
    - create a record
    - explain a policy or procedure
    - provide instructions
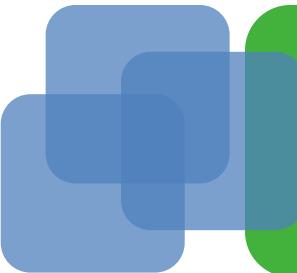   - encourage action
    - promote goodwill
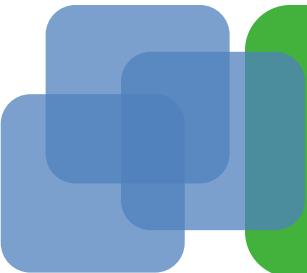
Scope

- Length

- Level of detail

- Format

Audience Profile

- Who are they?

- What do they know about the topic?

- How will they respond?

- Do they have any particular needs or expectations?

Medium or Channel

- Organization's requirements:
  - Accuracy
  - Speed
  - Cost
  - Permanent record
  - Organization preference

- Audience requirements:
  - Size of audience
  - Location of audience
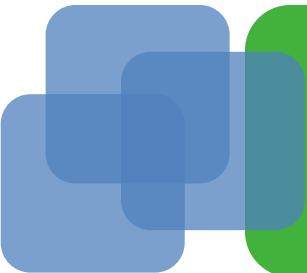 - Privacy
  - Opportunity for feedback
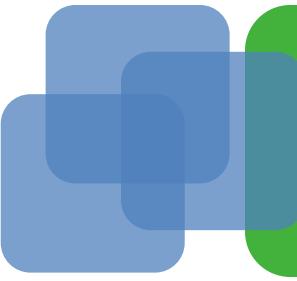
Medium or Channel, cont'd

- Content requirements:
  - Detail
  - Richness
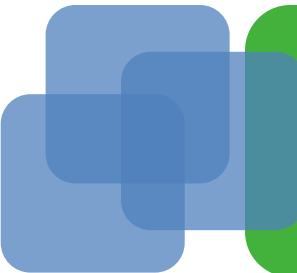 - Importance of message
  - Formality
  - Control
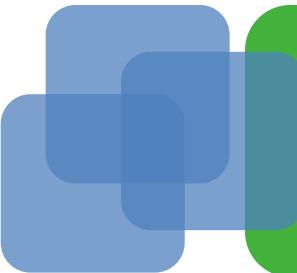
Content Generation

- Brainstorming

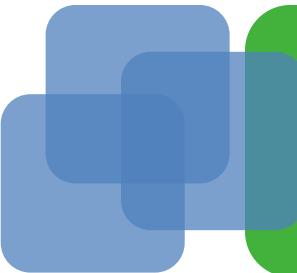- Mapping/clustering

- Asking questions

Organizing and Outlining

- Sequential (step-by-step)

- Chronological

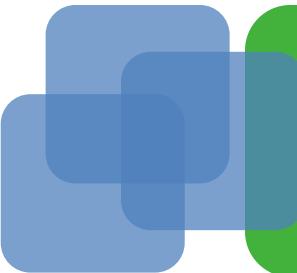- General to specific

- Cause and effect

Outlining

- Shows how to arrange ideas

- Ensures document is logical and complete

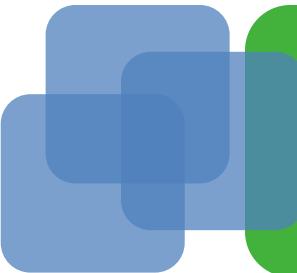- Provides framework for writing

Overcoming Writer's Block

- Start early
- Use a computer
- Talk it out
- Skip around

- Take a break
- Practice freewriting
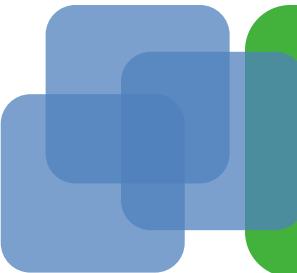- Adopt a positive attitude

Writing under Pressure

- Budget your time and limit distractions

- Plan the structure

- Remember your reader

- Start with the easy parts and revise later

Revising and Editing

- Print the draft out

- Read slowly

- Read the draft aloud

- Remember your reader
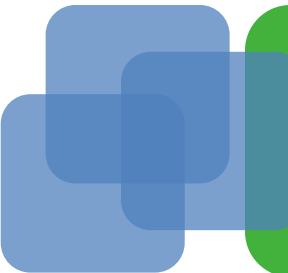
Revising and Editing, cont'd

- Revising: Three Steps
    1. Edit for completeness
    2. Tighten up structure and coherence
    3. Proofread for
        - redundancies and awkward passages
        - spelling, grammar, and punctuation
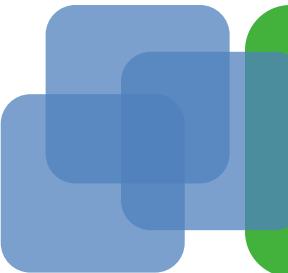   - formatting and typographical errors
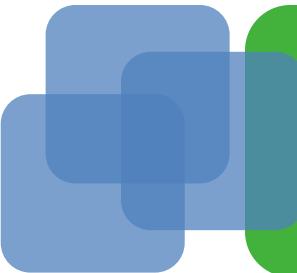
Collaborative Writing

- Challenges:
  - Takes longer
  - May be inconsistent
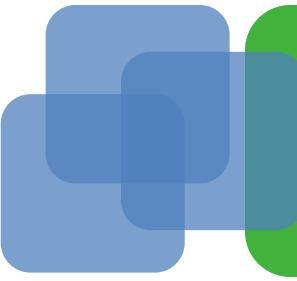 - Potential interpersonal conflict

Collaborative Writing, cont'd

- Strategies
  - Lead writing
  - Take a turn and pass it on
  - Puzzle
  - Side-by-side

Collaborative Writing, cont'd

- Tips
  - Listen to others
  - Appoint a coordinator
  - Plan ahead
  - Establish standards
  - Use technology
  - Delegate tasks
  - Foster cooperation
  - Edit for consistency

Critiquing Others' Work

- Build a safe environment

- Listen

- Stick to guidelines

- Be sensitive

- Avoid excessive or inappropriate criticism