Writing in the Army Style
BUFORD’S MESSAGE TO REYNOLDS
GETTYSBURG (1863)
Learning Objectives

- Describe the Army writing standards IAW AR 25-50
- Explain the meaning and importance of BLUF
- Understand how to write in the active voice
- Explain the steps in the writing process
Army Leadership Requirements Model
ADP/ADRP 6-22

Attributes

Character
- Army Values
- Empathy
- Warrior Ethos/Service Ethos
- Discipline

Presence
- Military and professional bearing
- Fitness
- Confidence
- Resilience

Intellect
- Mental agility
- Sound judgment
- Innovation
- Interpersonal tact
- Expertise

Leads
- Leads others
- Builds trust
- Extends influence beyond the chain of command
- Leads by example
- Communicates

Develops
- Creates a positive environment/
  Fosters esprit de corps
- Prepares self
- Develops others
- Stewards the profession

Achieves
- Gets results

Competencies
BLUF: Bottom Line Up Front: Put the recommendation, conclusion or reason for writing -- the bottom line -- in the first or second paragraph, not at the end

Use the active voice

Concise, organized, to the point

Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Write in the first person using “I,” “you” and “we” as subjects of sentences instead of “this office,” “this headquarters,” “all individuals,” and so forth, for most types of writing

Convey a clear message in single, rapid reading

Use Respectful, Professional Tone
Spell Check Poem

Spell check is only a tool and is not infallible, AR 25-50

The Spelling Chequer (or poet tree without mist takes)

Eye have a spelling chequer
    It came with my pea sea
    It plainly marks four my revue
    Miss steaks eye cannot see

Each thyme when I have struct the quays
    Eye weight four it two say
    If watt eye rote is wrong or rite
    It shows me strait a weigh

As soon as a mist ache is maid
    It nose bee fore too late
    And eye can put the error rite
    Eye really fined it grate

I've run this poem threw it
I'm sure your policed to no
It's letter perfect in its weigh
My chequer tolled me sew
    - Author Unknown
Army Writing Standards Bottom-Line-Up Front (BLUF)

☐ Straight to the Point
☐ Clear and Concise
☐ Explain Reasoning **After** BLUF
Active Voice

- It is a stronger form of expression because it indicates the Agent and shows the action
- It states the action in fewer words
- It prevents confusion about the actor. Use of “I” and “We; the first person takes responsibility for the action

**PASSIVE** - The subject of the sentence names the receiver of the action.

**ACTIVE** - The subject of the sentence names the receiver of the action

PASSIVE = RECEIVER --- VERB --- DOER
All weapons will be zeroed before qualification.

ACTIVE = DOER --- VERB --- RECEIVER
All qualifiers will zero their weapons before qualification.
Active Voice (cont.)

- NOT: Three teams were formed...
  - BUT: LTC Jones formed three teams...

- NOT: A TDY is requested by...
  - BUT: LTC Jones requests a TDY...

- NOT: The M4 was fired by PFC Smith...
  - BUT: PFC Smith fired the M4...

- NOT: The HMMWV was wrecked by PVT Jones.
  - BUT: PVT Jones wrecked the HMMWV
Practical Exercise

Instructions:
1) Divide the class into groups of 3-5 Cadets.
2) Distribute PE to each group
3) Have the groups review the PE and determine and rewrite the sentence into active voice if applicable.
4) Allow Cadets 3-5 minutes to complete the PE
5) Have one Cadet from each group present and explain their responses
The Elements of Effective Writing

- **Substance** – Control and support of your idea; most important element
- **Organization** – clear and concise; flow
- **Style** – format, vocabulary, “package”
- **Correctness** – grammar, spelling
Five Step Writing Process # 1

Step 1: Research - Research is the gathering of ideas and information. This is the step where you answer the "who, when, where, what, and how of the issue". Since we gather information in different ways, you must find the system which best suits you and your task. Ensure you document your sources.
Five Step Writing Process # 2

Step 2: Plan - The planning step is where you take all the information you’ve gathered and put it into a logical order. Start by placing your ideas into groups. Then order your groups in the way that best supports your task. The product that results is the outline.
Five Step Writing Process # 3

Step 3: Develop a Draft- The draft is the bridge between your idea and the expression of it. Write your draft quickly and concentrate only on getting your ideas down on paper. Don’t worry about punctuation and spelling. Use your outline to develop your draft.
Five Step Writing Process # 4

Step 4: Revise - Revising is looking at the material through the eyes of your audience. Read the paper as if you have never seen it before. Find where you need to put in transitions; look for places that need more evidence. This will help you decide if you need to add enclosures or add information depending on the type of written product you are developing.
Five Step Writing Process # 5

Step 5: Proof- Now you are ready to proof your draft. At this point concentrate on the format, grammar, mechanics, and usage. You may want to have someone else read it. Sometimes others can find errors you can’t because you are too close to the product. When you finish, write the final version, making the corrections.
# The Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance Organization</td>
<td>Step 1 - Research Step 2 - Plan Step 3 - Draft</td>
<td>Transmits a clear message in a single rapid reading...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style Correctness</td>
<td>Step 4 - Revise Step 5 - Proof</td>
<td>...generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Written Communications
Major Types

☐ Memorandums

☐ Operations Orders (OPORDs)

☐ Endorsements
Types of Memorandum

☐ Formal Memos
  ■ External to HQ, Command, Installation or DOD
  ■ Personnel actions
  ■ Appreciation and Commendations

☐ Informal Memos
  ■ Internal to HQ, Command, Installation, or DOD

☐ Special Purpose Memos
  ■ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
  ■ Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
  ■ Memorandum for Record (MFR)
Memorandum Format AR 25-50, Chaps, 2-4

**Heading: Five elements**
- Office symbol
- Date
- Suspension date
- MEMORANDUM FOR line
- Subject line

**Body:**
Begin the memorandum with a short, clear purpose sentence. Put the recommendation, conclusion, or most important information (the main point) next. (Some writing combines the purpose and the main point.)
Clearly separate each major section. Use paragraphs, headings, or sections.
When appropriate, a point of contact (POC) line will be the last paragraph of the body of the correspondence.

**Closing:** Major elements are the-
- Authority line
- Signature block
- Enclosure listing
Take Home Quiz

☐ Work alone

☐ Rewrite the statements on each handout using the Army writing style

☐ Write a memorandum according to instructions on the quiz sheet
Closing

Review Learning Objectives

☐ Explain the meaning and importance of BLUF
☐ Understand how to write in the active voice
☐ Describe the Army writing standards IAW AR 25-50
☐ Explain the steps in the writing process

Questions

Next Lesson:

Subsequent Lesson:

CADET POST-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

 Complete Quiz and turn in prior to next class