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Writing Shipyard Reports
Training Instructor's Guide

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
      Maritime Administration
U.S. Navy

in cooperation with
The University of Michigan

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16. Abstract

Written communication is extremely important in increasing shipyard efficiency. However, written communication can reduce productivity because reports take time to write and to read. Writing Shipyard Reports is intended to help shipyard managers, engineers, and other professionals to write and prepare reports in a more efficient manner. This Training Instructor's Guide provides a framework for training instructors in U.S. shipyards to use in developing a course to improve the written communication skills of shipyard professionals. It is to be used with the accompanying Writing Shipyard Reports manual.

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Writing Shipyard

Reports

Training Instructor's

Guide

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Program in Technical Communication
The College of Engineering
The University of Michigan

and

The University of Michigan
Transportation Research Institute
Marine Systems Division

A Product of the
Written Communication for
U.S. Shipyard Professionals
Project

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1. Purpose

This *Training Instructor's Guide* provides a framework for training instructors in U. S. Shipyards to use in preparing detailed lesson plans for an in-house course in report writing. It is designed for use with *Writing Shipyard Reports.*

Together, these two resources have been prepared for teaching report writing to shipyard professionals in response to the report, "Curricular Needs of Shipyard Professionals."[1] The "Curricular Needs" report presents the results of a survey of shipyard managers to identify curricular and training needs of graduate professionals in shipyards. Ten U. S. Shipyards participated in the survey, with a total employment of 1210 graduate professionals: 588 with engineering degrees, 201 with business administration and management degrees, and 421 with various other degrees.

Participants in a report writing course should be very interested in the results of the "Curricular Needs" survey. It revealed that shipyard executives consider report writing skills as crucial for shipyard employees. These executives ranked technical/business writing as the most important college subject (4.9 on a scale of 5)--more important than engineering science, mathematics, business, computer science, basic science, social sciences, and humanities subjects. Furthermore, they ranked technical/business writing second as a subject about which entry-level engineers lacked sufficient knowledge and skills (knowledge of production processes ranked first).

This *Guide* and *Writing Shipyard Reports* will help you develop a course to improve the written communication skills of shipyard professionals. Discussion of the "Curricular Needs of Shipyard Professionals" report would make a good point of departure for such a course, especially one for recent college graduates. It should orient them to on-the-job needs and motivate them to take the course seriously.

1. Paul W. Vickers, "Curricular Needs of Shipyard Professionals," University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, Report No. UMTRI-84-17, June 1984.

2. Report Writing Needs

Writing Shipyard Reports is a report writing manual devoted exclusively to shipyard reports. We prepared it after interviewing 53 managers, engineers, and other professionals in four shipyards. They provided detailed explanations about the types of written communication they considered important for their roles and their departments. They also identified specific report writing needs and suggested ways to improve written communication procedures and practices.

As background for preparing an in-house course in shipyard report writing, you might be interested in the issues and needs identified by these people during the interviews. We have divided their comments into report writing issues and management issues. We suggest that you prepare an overhead for each to show to the class. The managers' comments should stimulate a discussion that will sensitize the participants to report writing needs. Because there are no clearcut resolutions to these issues, the participants will become aware of some of the judgments they have to make when writing reports.

2. 1. Report Writing Issues.

Managers, engineers, and other professionals raise seven types of issues about report writing in their shipyards:

2.1.1. Detail (28 Persons)

2.1.2. Content (16 Persons)

2.1.3. Arrangement and Formatting (16 Persons)

2.1.4. Style and Grammar (14 Persons)

2.1.5. Graphics (12 Persons)

2.1.6. Boilerplate Formats (8 Persons)

2.1.7. Documentation (8 Persons)

As you can see, the issues they raise are quite diverse. An in-house course in report writing has to cover many topics in addition to style and grammar. The manual, *Writing Shipyard Reports*, offers suggestions in all of these areas. The Reference Section includes guidelines that address most of them.

2.1.1. Detail. The writer must decide how much technical detail to include in a report, letter, or memorandum. Most report writers are surprised to learn that this is an issue of how much detail to omit. Most readers want brevity, although some are concerned about the lack of supporting detail. *Writing Shipyard Reports* discusses this issue in several chapters, in particular the chapter on "Selecting Information for the Discussion."

Here are some comments by shipyard managers and engineers that participants in an in-house course might find interesting:

> "Keep all memos to a page. Persons won't read over a page."
>
> "The rule of thumb is: the less said the better. Get straight to the point."
>
> "Some persons can't write a brief report or memorandum. Senior management does not read lengthy memos."
>
> "Verbosity--people write too much."
>
> "If writers err, it's usually because of too little detail."
>
> "In general, the enginer says too little--he assumes the reader has the detailed knowledge he has."
>
> "Limited information--not enough technical information to convince a client."

As you can see, there is some disagreement over how much detail to include. However, it is clear that for the report writer a key question is, "what is the relevant detail?"

2.1.2. Content. The writer must decide what information to include in a report. The issue of detail is a matter of amount; the issue of content is a matter of topic. Many readers find reports unclear because the writers fail to identify the problem, have been inconclusive, include inappropriate discussion, and fail to make the topic of the report clear. *Writing Shipyard Reports* discusses these problems in several chapters, including "Understanding the Function of Shipyard Reports," "Preparing the Summary," and "Organizing the Discussion."

Some illustrative comments are:

> "You finish some memos and don't know what they're about."
>
> "Some memos don't make sense: the analysis is unclear and the writing is unclear."

"Engineers don't want to commit themselves. They should
commit more to paper and promptly."

"Some writers weigh the pros and the cons, but leave it to
someone else to make the decision."

"They describe a technical problem in great detail, but leave you
hanging about the conclusion."

2.1.3. Arrangement and Formatting. The writer should arrange and
format the information so that the report can be scanned or read efficiently. This is a
matter of effective organization, the use of attachments, and the use of headings and
other formatting devices. *Writing Shipyard Reports* discusses these issues in
"Establishing the Basic Report Structure," "Organizing the Discussion," "Designing
and Revising Paragraphs," and "Using Visual Aids and Formatting Devices."

Some comments are:

"Too often the engineer's mind is way out ahead of the reader, and
all over the map."

"Like topics are not put together; this results in unnecessary
repetition."

"Some writers simply present good points and bad points; they
aren't intertwined, so the reader has to dig to get the answer."

"The problem is not clearly stated--writers assume you know what
they're talking about; they start in the middle of the argument and
don't include information."

"Use attachments, enclosures, or references for details."

"Use formatting such as bold face type and indenting to help the
reader."

"Appearance is important and needs to be taken seriously."

"When engineering prepares a document for internal distribution, it
should be in a form to go to the customer."

"Break paragraphs down into small clusters rather than use long,
run-on paragraphs."

2.1.4. Style and Grammar. A report writer must be concise and write
in direct, plain English. Acceptable grammar and mechanics are fundamental
prerequisites. The manual discusses these topics in "Writing and Editing Sentences"

and "Designing and Revising Paragraphs." Writers with severe problems in this area, especially non-native English speakers, will need intensive training that goes beyond what can be covered in a typical in-house course in report writing. Such intensive training can be either tutorial or a course specifically devoted to English composition, especially to sentences and paragraphs.

Typical comments are:

> "The engineer's writing is full of ambiguities."
>
> "The wording must be precise and standard."
>
> "Simple declarative sentences are needed--with a minimum of modifying phrases and clauses."
>
> "Write for the user--no flowery language."
>
> "Often poorly written, vague, ambiguous--I have to call to clarify."
>
> "I get tired of having to recycle my engineers' reports when they are too wordy--or when they are too blunt and aggressive."
>
> "Articles are omitted, adjectives are run together, things are described in too few words."

2.1.5. Graphics. A writer should replace words with graphics or supplement words with graphics when that would be more effective. Some reports can be put in a format that is primarily graphic. The manual introduces this topic in "Understanding the Function of Shipyard Reports" and discusses it in "Using Visual Aids and Formatting Devices."

Several comments are:

> "Occasionally questions arise because of prose without drawings."
>
> "A quick sketch will do."
>
> "Need other types of illustration besides a two-dimensional drawing."
>
> "It's best to put data on a table. Preparing a table forces the writer to crystalize his thinking."

2.1.6. Boilerplate Formats. The writer often has to decide whether to use a boilerplate format or to tailor a report for a specific purpose. This is discussed in "Using Visual Aids and Formatting Devices."

Some suggestions are:

> "Use a format template for routine communications."

"Develop a routine format."

"The format needs to be proper in terms of established procedures, both government and internal."

2.1.7. Documentation. A report writer should take advantage of standard documentation techniques, such as references and filing codes. Prior communications should be identified. Information retrieval systems are important. This topic is briefly discussed in "Establishing the Basic Report Structure" and in "Preparing the Summary."

Common concerns are:

"Calculations often are not documented. A year later you can't figure out why and how it was done."

"References are used, but no copies are attached."

"Overuse of references without identification of the subject of the reference itself--have to search the central file."

"Documentation of problems is very important, especially to construct a claim."

"Reference background information unless it's necessary to include it."

"A contract is not identified or identified properly."

2.2. Management Issues.

In shipyards, management practices and standard procedures provide the context within which professionals actually write reports. Even though most of the these are not covered in the manual or in the syllabus, you will find it necessary to discuss them in connection with certain topics.

Managers and others we interviewed raise four issues related to communication procedures:

2.2.1. Written or Oral? (23 Persons)

2.2.2. Where Is a Report Distributed? (20 Persons)

2.2.3. Feedback and Follow-Up? (17 Persons)

2.2.4. Formal or Informal Procedures? (16 Persons)

These issues can be discussed in connection with specific reports that participants in

the course are writing.

2.2.1. Written or Oral? A specific letter or memo is part of a communication process that includes other written and oral communication. Thus, most of the issues that arise concern the relationships between written and oral communication. In general, written reports are action-oriented; oral communication provides a context and background. This suggests some criteria to determine when to write and what to include in a report.

Representative comments on this issue are:

> "Within Engineering, there is too much oral--the result is lack of documentation and nothing being done."

> "We're inclined to have a meeting to discuss things, and then wait for the minutes. There is no means of formalizing actions and commitments."

> "Resolve issues orally."

> "Avoid program management by memo."

2.2.2. Where Is a Report Distributed? Whom to address and where to send a report are questions that should be raised in connection with most reports, especially reports circulated within a shipyard. Report writers should do an effective audience analysis, as discussed in *Writing Shipyard Reports*, and then make the tradeoffs as best they can between what management requires and what they think should be done. When they determine the specific purpose of a report, they usually know what these tradeoffs are. Because of standard procedures and the requirements of individual managers, however, the questions often cannot be answered as the writers themselves would like.

Managers and engineers raise the problem:

> "I address the department head, but he doesn't transmit it to people below who do the work."

> "Those 'who need to know' aren't always included on the distribution list."

> "I get memos I don't need--and don't get what I should."

> "I get reports written to my title, not to what I do."

2.2.3. Feedback or Follow-Up? A number of managers expressed concern about feedback and follow-up mechanisms. With overloaded schedules and

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a daily deluge of paper, questions arise over whether or not feedback or follow-up to a report is required. At times this is a problem of time-lag—getting a response or action in due time.

Indicative comments are:

"If it's worth writing, it's worth a response."

"My drawings weren't followed by the yard, but I didn't realize it. I assumed prior procedures and didn't realize they had been modified."

"A memo can be addressed to 15 persons without the action person being identified."

"I can never get communication out of XYZ shipyard."

Standard forms and procedures sometimes include built-in feedback and follow-up mechanisms, as several sample reports in the manual illustrate. However, often this is left to the writer's and readers' discretion, especially with important reports.

2.2.4. Formal or Informal Procedures? Managers and engineers raise a cluster of issues under the general topic, "formal versus informal." For example, when should a report be distributed laterally and when should it be routed up through management and then back down? Should these procedures be formalized? When and how should standard forms be used? What is the relationship between a computer printout and a written report—when can one rely solely on a printout? What is the most efficient means of preparing a report when more than one writer or department is involved?

Some suggestions are:

"Whenever possible, develop a routine format."

"There's no scheduling for report writing, but it's an activity just like any other in the yard."

"The review cycle is endless, and each manager revises the document according to his own interpretation. The result is a collage without stylistic continuity, no continuity of thought, and lack of direction to the plan" [for group writing].

"People write to people, not departments—and the key people get left out."

"I look at the organization chart and see that the rapid changes

during this past year are not conducive to establishing effective communication channels."

"It's appropriate to send to the superintendent when you're not sure who will perform a task, but then you depend on the priorities of the superintendent."

Writing Shipyard Reports discusses some of these issues, but for the most part these are matters of management practices in any specific shipyard. For an in-house course in report writing, you should let the participants raise these in connection with specific topics, such as audience analysis and the use of standard forms. The purpose is to make the participants aware of these issues so that they can take them into consideration when writing reports.

3. Types of Shipyard Reports

As you notice when you read *Writing Shipyard Reports*, we concentrate on short reports--memoranda, letters, and certain types of reports that people write almost daily in a shipyard. We do not discuss proposals, formal technical reports, test reports, papers, etc. We do so on the basis of a survey of the 53 persons we interviewed to determine their priorities. Most of them put a higher priority on the everyday working memoranda and reports than on the longer, more formal documents. In addition, some of these longer reports are group-written, which involves additional techniques not addressed in the manual. (We have found the shorter type of communication to be the primary concern of managers in other industries as well as in shipyards.)

We should mention that we use the term "report" to cover almost all types of written communication in a shipyard. You may find that your participants use the term more specifically, distinguishing between a memorandum and a report and between a letter and a report. If that is the case with your participants, for the in-house course you should modify our terminology accordingly.

The participants might be interested in the responses of the shipyard managers and professionals we interviewed. Based on the types of written communication they mentioned during the interviews, our questionnaire divided shipyard communications into eight categories (Table 1). It then identified types of reports within each category according to purpose or a commonly accepted name. For each type of report, we asked the respondents to tell us if we should (1) focus on it, (2) include it, or (3) omit it from our study. Thirty-two persons responded to this questionnaire. Because this small sample might not be representative of shipyard professionals as a whole, their responses might only suggest possible priorities of managers and others in your yard.

In decreasing order of priority, here is how the interviewees ranked the twenty-three types of reports (on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 highest priority):

      1.28 Request for Action/Information/Decision (Internal)*
      1.30 Convey Change/Information/Decision (Internal)*
      1.33 Request for Action/Information/Decision (External: Owner)*

1.39 Request for Action/Information/Decision (External: Navy)*

1.46 Convey Change/Information/Decision (External: Owner)*

1.47 Status Reports*

1.47 Procedures and Instructions*

1.50 Convey Change/Information/Decision (External: Navy)*

1.50 Request for Action/Information/Decision (External: Vendor)*

1.50 Specifications

1.56 Request for Proposal (External: Vendor)

1.59 Recommendation/Proposal (Internal)*

1.62 Technical Reports/Feasibility Studies

1.67 Proposal (External)

1.70 Schedules

1.74 Administrative Policies and Procedures

1.77 Minutes: Meetings, Telephone, Trip*

1.79 Oral Presentations

1.92 Contract Commitment (External: Vendor)

1.96 Contract Data Requirement (CDRL)

1.96 Graphics

2.08 Test Reports

2.46 Indexes

*Discussed in *Writing Shipyard Reports*

Writing Shipyard Reports concentrates on the reports ranked with higher priority. For simplicity and clarity, we have reclassified the "Request for Action/Information/Decision" and "Convey Change/Information/Decision" reports as "Decision Making Reports" and "Implementation Reports" and dropped the distinctions between "internal," "external: owner," and "external: Navy."

Table 1. Shipyard Report Types on Questionnaire

Design and Construction Engineering (Internal)

> Request for Action/Information/Decision
> Convey Change/Information/Decision

Design and Construction Engineering (External: Owner)

> Request for Action/Information/Decision
> Convey Change/Information/Decision

Design and Construction Engineering (External: Navy)

> Request for Action/Information/Decision
> Convey Change/Information/Decision
> Contract Data Requirement (CDRL)

Design and Construction Engineering (External: Vendor)

> Request for Proposal
> Contract Commitment
> Request for Action/Information/Decision

Design and Contract Administration

> Proposal (External)
> Recommendation/Proposal (Internal)
> Schedules
> Status Reports
> Minutes: Meeting, Telephone, Trip
> Procedures and Instructions
> Specifications

Technical Development

> Technical Reports/Feasibility Studies
> Test Reports

Shipyard Administration

> Administrative Policies and Procedures
> Indexes

Other Technical Communication Modes

> Graphics
> Oral Presentations

4. Syllabus for an In-House Course

This syllabus outlines a 12-unit in-house course for report writers and their supervisors in U. S. shipyards, which you can adapt to the schedules of the supervisors, engineers, and staff professionals in the yard. The success of the course depends on active contribution and participation by all participants. Success also depends on the support of managers and the active participation of supervisors in the course. Managers should be familiar with the principles of report writing as presented in the course and supervisors should participate in discussion of some of the issues and tradeoffs that must be made when writing reports.

The outline includes suggestions on these components of instruction:

Objectives

Lecture/discussion

Workshop

Background Reading

Assignment

Some materials from the "Reference Section" of *Writing Shipyard Reports* are included in the separate attachment for you to use to prepare masters of overheads that will be useful with some units.

Writing Shipyard Reports should be made available to all participants. We designed it as a text and reference. Although other texts on report writing could be used, this manual was designed specifically for use in shipyards. Outside of our own book, *Designing Technical Reports*, few if any texts have examples of reports from the industry. The manual should be supplemented by a good handbook on English usage, such as the *Harbrace College Handbook*. A good style book might also be helpful. If so, we suggest Joseph M. Williams, *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*.

The manual and syllabus should enable you to develop course materials specifically for your yard. We assume that an in-house course is best designed and taught according to the report writing procedures and practices in a shipyard itself. In such a course we expect participants to use reports they actually write and encounter on the job.

The syllabus assumes a process approach to report writing. The units progress from initial concerns such as audience analysis and formulation of report purposes to basic design concerns such as establishing the basic structure and selecting and arranging information to actual writing and editing.

Syllabus Outline

Unit 1: Assessing Report Writing Skills

Unit 2: The Function of Shipyard Reports

Unit 3: Shipyard Report Audiences

Unit 4: Basic Structure of Shipyard Reports

Unit 5: Report Headings and Summaries

Unit 6: Report Writing Assessment Workshop

Unit 7: Selecting and Organizing Information in the Discussion

Unit 8: Writing and Editing Paragraphs

Unit 9: Writing and Editing Sentences

Unit 10: Formatting and Visual Aids

Unit 11: Report Writing Assessment Workshop

Unit 12: Assessing Report Writing Skills

Unit 1

Assessing Report Writing Skills

Objectives:

To make the participants aware of the importance of report writing.

To introduce the participants to report writing issues and management issues related to report writing.

To familiarize the participants with the process approach to report writing.

To assess the participants' report writing needs.

Lecture/discussion:

An introduction to the course can precede the report writing skills assessment workshop or it can be a separate module that follows the report writing skills assessment workshop. For this unit, the workshop might precede the lecture/discussion, as the skills assessment workshop functions as a pretest to evaluate the report writing proficiency of the participants at the beginning of the course. Discussion of the material in Section 2 of the *Guide* before the participants write the impromptu report in the workshop will influence their performance and thus not provide a dependable pre-test.

You should introduce the course with a lecture and discussion of the material presented in Sections 1 and 2 of this *Guide* as well as with a review of the course outline itself. You also should explain the process approach to report writing upon which the syllabus is based. Additionally, you should alert participants to the facts that they will be writing or rewriting reports they actually are writing or have written on the job and that they will be reading, evaluating, and discussing each other's reports.

Workshop:

Have the participants write an impromptu report given the information provided. Allow them about one hour, and certainly no more than an hour and a half.

If any are used to composing at a wordprocesser, allow them to do so. When we conduct this workshop, we allow participants to go anyplace they wish to write the report and to use any sources (such as a dictionary) that they wish. We ask only that they write the report without assistance so that we can evaluate their own skills.

This is a pretest to assess the participants' writing skills. The report writing skills assessment in Section 6 of this *Guide* has been prepared for this purpose. You can develop a similar assessment for your particular yard or for any group of participants.

Our suggestion is that you collect these responses and analyze them to determine what to emphasize in the following units. That is, we recommend that you don't discuss these impromptu reports with the participants during the next unit. Instead, refer to various impromptu reports as appropriate thoughout all of the units. You should prepare an evaluation form (Section 5) for each impromptu report to keep on file in case a participant wants to discuss his or her performance in a conference with you.

At the conclusion of the course, you can do one of two things. First, you can xerox and distribute these pre-test impromptu reports among small groups of participants to discuss after having been through the course. Second, as suggested for unit 12 of this syllabus, you can repeat the workshop as the concluding unit of the course. This will be a sort of post-test.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 1, "Overview of the Report Writing Process." This chapter explains the process approach to report writing. Checklist 1, Reference Section A of the manual, outlines the process.

Assignment:

Participants should be asked to fill out the questionnaire, "Important Types of Written Communication in Shipyards" (Appendix A), for the next unit.

Unit 2

The Function of Shipyard Reports

Objectives:

To encourage participants to think in terms of the purpose or function of the reports they write.

To enable participants to classify reports they read and write in terms of function.

To introduce participants to the principle that report design depends on the purpose of a report.

Lecture/discussion:

Shipyard reports as classified in the manual and this *Guide* should be discussed to introduce the participants to various types of shipyard reports. Section 3 of this *Guide* presents the responses we received when we originally distributed the questionnaire to shipyard managers.

The participants should be asked to explain their answers to the questionnaire, which was the Unit 1 assignment. You should have the class as a group collate their responses to come up with a classification of reports according to type and function. The group's consensus can be compared to the classification we present in Section 3.

Pages 3 and 4 of the questionnaire yielded the responses of shipyard managers that we summarized in Sections 1 and 2 of this *Guide*. Your review in Unit 1 of these responses will influence the participants' responses to the questionnaire assignment. However, their responses still will be worth some discussion. Presumably, they will differ among themselves on problems and priorities.

Workshop:

The workshop can consist of the process of collating the participants' questionnaires. Perhaps the participants can be grouped by departments to do this in small groups. Then each subgroup can present its analysis to the entire class. (You should keep copies of these workshop materials to use in subsequent courses.)

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 2, "Understanding the Function of Shipyard Reports." Reference Section B of the manual, "Report Writing Guidelines and Sample Reports," presents the complete selection of sample reports arranged in terms of report type.

Assignment:

Participants should detail their responses to the audience item for the "Functions of Specific Communications," page 2 of the questionnaire they completed for this unit. That is, for one or two reports they should prepare a table similar to Table 3 in *Writing Shipyard Reports*.

Unit 3

Shipyard Report Audiences

Objectives:

To enable participants to identify diverse audiences for a report.

To lead participants to think in terms of readers' needs.

Lecture/discussion:

You should briefly review our audience classification terminology. Our assumption is that most reports worth consideration in a course such as this have what we call complex or diverse audiences. You can provoke an interesting discussion by asking four questions:

Can you identify any reports you receive or write that do not have a complex audience?

Can you think of any reports that were not sent to all of the persons who should have received them?

Can you think of any reports that were sent to persons who should not have received them?

Can you think of any reports that did not include information needed by one or several of the primary or secondary audiences?

Workshop:

The assignment asked participants to prepare a table of audiences for a report (or two tables for two reports). This workshop can consist of a discussion of their tables (perhaps each participant could have been asked to bring copies to distribute to the class or each participant could have an overhead of his or her table to show to the class). The participants should discuss and evaluate each other's audience analysis. As they are all from the same yard but from different departments, they will be familiar with most of the reports and audience situations outlined on the tables.

You should collect copies of these tables. The second time you teach the

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course you can use them as illustrations for lecture/discussion.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 3, "Establishing the Basic Report Structure."

Assignment:

Participants should analyze the basic structure of one, two, or three sample reports they have written or received. They should ask, "Do these reports have the three components as discussed in the manual?" "Do the reports move from general to specific as discussed in the manual?" If the answers are "no" or "somewhat," they should be asked to determine whether or not the reports should be revised to have a more effective basic structure.

Unit 4

Basic Structure of Shipyard Reports

Objectives:

      To enable participants to identify the major components of a report.

      To enable participants to design a basic structure for their

reports.

      To familiarize the participants with the principle of general to specific.

Lecture/discussion:

      You should review the two basic principles illustrated in the manual: reports have three components and reports move from general to specific. You can do this by using overheads of the sample reports in the reference section of the manual. Identify the three components of structure in those samples and explain how they go from general to specific.

      Then the discussion should evaluate the basic structures of the sample reports the participants analyzed for the assignment. (If possible, you should make copies of these samples for use in future courses.) When the participants cannot resolve uncertainty or debate over the effectiveness of the basic structure of a sample report, you might compare that sample to a similar sample in the reference section of the manual.

Workshop:

      The participants should be asked to rewrite the sample report in Figure 7 of the manual to establish an effective basic structure. Typical reponses then can be read and analyzed.

      An intermediate step would be to form small groups after the participants have rewritten the sample report and have each group come up with a second revision representing the consensus of the group. These group samples then can be read and analyzed. (Whenever the workshop situation allows, we recommend that you form small groups so that the participants can interact with each other in a group writing and

problem-solving situation. This is a productive teaching method in a course on report writing.)

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 3.

Assignment:

From the sample reports that were analyzed for the last assignment, you and the participants should select several reports of different types. Have the participants revise the summary section of each--the heading, the purpose statement, and the conclusions and recommendations or other generalizations.

Unit 5

Report Headings and Summaries

Objectives:

To enable participants to write effective summaries. Specifically:

Participants should be able to write a precise subject line, to include relevant heading information, and to format heading information effectively.

Participants should be able to write an appropriate purpose statement.

Participants should be able to select the appropriate general and important information to put up front in a report.

Participants should know how to include summary information in standard forms and formats.

Lecture/discussion:

You should carefully review the material in Chapter 4 of the manual, "Preparing the Summary." Illustrate effective summary information of sample reports in the reference section. Pay particular attention to adapting the principles of preparing the summary to specific reports, especially to reports in standard formats.

The difficult areas are the subject line, the purpose statement, and generalizations. Subject lines are often general. Purpose statements are often wordy, containing unncessary background information and failing to signal the communication purpose of the report. Generalizations are either too detailed, being confused with the discussion details, or are too vague or unquantified.

The discussion should include analysis by the participants of each other's assignments. Again, this can be done in small groups before general class discussion. As the assignment involves reports actually written in your shipyard, you should note and discuss any differences between the standard practices in your yard and those illustrated in the manual. Means of improving shipyard practices should be discussed

Assignment 1:

On the basis of the workshop discussion, each participant should rewrite and edit his or her report. At your discretion, you can evaluate these revisions yourself or else you can have a follow-up evaluation workshop. Multiple copies will be required for the follow-up workshop. The follow-up workshop should have the participants in the same groups as the original workshop, as new perspectives and criticism can be confusing at this point in the course. The follow-up workshop will be an additional course unit.

Note: you should maintain a file of copies of all original and revised reports. This will be a valuable source of examples for this and subsequent courses. For example, at this point you can collect samples of paragraphs and sentences that need editing and use them for workshops later in this course.

Assignment 2:

The participants should evaluate the discussion information in the revised reports for their group or in a set of reports you select. They should evaluate the discussion of each by asking:

What is the justification for the information included in the discussion?

What information was available but not included in the discussion?

Why was available information not included in the discussion?

How is the information in the discussion organized?

In what other ways could the information in the discussion be organized?

Unit 6

Report Writing Assessment Workshop

Objectives:

To improve report writing skills, especially analyzing the audience, formulating the purpose, establishing a basic structure, and preparing the heading and summary information.

To hone basic report editing skills.

To enhance the participants' critical evaluation skills.

Workshop:

The workshop consists of evaluating reports in peer groups and revising reports in response to the evaluations. The assignment for this unit requires each participant to write his or her own report. For the workshop, divide the participants into groups of four or five. Each group member is to receive and evaluate a copy of each of the reports written by the other group members. (These reports can be distributed in advance of the workshop; if not, an hour needs to be set aside so that the participants can read and evaluate their group's reports.)

The workshop consists of discussion of each participant's report by the group. You may or may not participate in this evaluation process, but if you do you should do so largely as an observor. Your role is to facilitate group interaction and to establish a schedule so that all reports are discussed. For short reports 10 to 15 minutes for each report will be sufficient. You especially should keep the participants discussing the report as a document instead of digressing to discuss the technical content of the report. The partipants should discuss and evaluate the reports among themselves if they are to develop the skills of critical analysis and evaluation.

As a guide for the discussion, the participants should complete an evaluation form (Section 5) for each report in their group. The form will focus the discussion on specific points. Areas of agreement as well as areas of disagreement can be identified.

Assignment 1:

On the basis of the workshop discussion, each participant should rewrite and edit his or her report. At your discretion, you can evaluate these revisions yourself or else you can have a follow-up evaluation workshop. Multiple copies will be required for the follow-up workshop. The follow-up workshop should have the participants in the same groups as the original workshop, as new perspectives and criticism can be confusing at this point in the course. The follow-up workshop will be an additional course unit.

Note: you should maintain a file of copies of all original and revised reports. This will be a valuable source of examples for this and subsequent courses. For example, at this point you can collect samples of paragraphs and sentences that need editing and use them for workshops later in this course.

Assignment 2:

The participants should evaluate the discussion information in the revised reports for their group or in a set of reports you select. They should evaluate the discussion of each by asking:

What is the justification for the information included in the discussion?

What information was available but not included in the discussion?

Why was available information not included in the discussion?

How is the information in the discussion organized?

In what other ways could the information in the discussion be organized?

Unit 7

Selecting and Organizing Information in the Discussion

Objectives:

To enable participants to select information according to the purpose of a report and the needs of its readers.

To enable participants to organize information according to the purpose of a report and the needs of its readers.

To enable participants to recognize alternative possibilities of organizing the information in a report.

Lecture/discussion:

You should discuss the information in Chapter 5 of the manual, "Selecting Information for the Discussion," with the participants. This information is summarized in the Report Writing Guidelines in the reference section of the manual. Pay specific attention to variations from those guidelines in reports in your yard. Also discuss variations among departments in your yard. In addition, discuss the selection of information for types of reports the participants have to write but which are not covered in the manual.

Review the information in Chapter 6 of the manual, "Organizing the Discussion," in terms of all of the sample reports in Reference Section B. Note variations in patterns of organization. Emphasize that the patterns outlined in Chapter 6 are guidelines, not stipulated outlines. Also explain that the patterns of organization are independent of type of report. For example, the report, "Sample Decision Making Report Requests and Action," is a decision making report with an analysis pattern rather than a problem and solution or persuasion pattern.

Workshop:

The assignment asked participants to evaluate the selection and organization of information in the reports written for unit 6. These can be discussed in small groups or with the class as a whole. If with the class as a whole, you probably should make

overheads of the reports for reference during the discussion. Discussion of the reports with the entire class will take more time, but will introduce the participants to more examples and perhaps to different reports. Similar reports can be compared and contrasted in terms of selection and organization of information.

For subsequent courses, this workshop can include two additional exercises. First, you can collect examples of poorly designed reports--reports with an excess of ineffectively arranged detail--and ask the participants to revise them. Second, you can present information in tabular form and ask participants to write or design a report to present the information in terms of a purpose either you or they select. These exercises usually involve additional practice in preparing the basic structure and summary of a report.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapters 5 and 6, "Selecting Information for the Discussion" and "Organizing the Discussion."

Assignment:

Participants should be asked to evaluate and, if necessary, revise the paragraphs in the report they wrote and revised for unit six, using Checklist 11, Reference Section A of the manual. They also should be asked to revise sample paragraphs that you distribute to them. Usually, four paragraphs are sufficient for an exercise, unless you divide the class into groups so that each group revises several paragraphs. (You will have to collect sample paragraphs from the reports the participants write in the course. In addition, you can find sample paragraphs in other reports and documents in the yard. Eventually, you will build up a file of samples to use for this assignment.)

Unit 8

Writing and Editing Paragraphs

Objectives:

To enable the participants to know the features of effective paragraphing.

To enable participants to formulate a topic sentence or controlling generalization for a conceptual paragraph.

To enable participants to establish effective paragraphs patterns.

To enable participants to edit sentences to fit into the paragraph contexts.

To enable participants to format in paragraph clusters as appropriate.

To enable participants to revise rough draft paragraphs efficiently.

Lecture/discussion:

Review the information in Chapter 7 of the manual, "Designing and Revising Paragraphs." Present the guidelines in Figure 22 as a means of revising paragraphs systematically. Supplement the examples in the text with examples that you collect and file. Use some of the examples discussed in the workshop for this unit for lecture examples in subsequent courses, as they will be in "before" and "after" versions.

Workshop:

The participants should discuss revisions of their own paragraphs as well as the samples they revised in the workshop exercise you distributed. For their own paragraphs, they probably should prepare overheads of the before and after versions, as the others may not have copies. Perhaps each participant can discuss one paragraph. For the workshop exercise paragraphs, ask several participants to read their revisions of each paragraph. Usually, the different revisions will stimulate discussion of alternative possibilities, as all the participants will have revised each paragraph. If you have divided the class into groups to do the exercise, they can present their revisions to the entire class.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 7, "Designing and Revising Paragraphs."

Assignment:

The participants should be asked to revise a number of sentences that you have collected from the reports they and others in your yard have written. These sentences will illustrate various editing problems randomly rather than systematically. They should not be arranged according to categories of problems; rather, they should be arranged so that the participants have to determine the problem(s) before revising them. (In any case, stylistic problems tend to come in clusters. A wordy sentence will have passive constructions, etc.).

Also ask the participants to classify all of the sentence-level problems noted to date in the two reports that they have written. This is important because each person usually has a limited cluster of problems, and generic exercises such as the one above address many problems which any one individual does not have. (A generic exercise is useful, however, so that participants can spot problems that others have. This is important for group writers as well as for supervisors.)

Unit 9

Writing and Editing Sentences

Objectives:

To enable participants to write and edit sentences to be grammatically correct.

To enable participants to write and edit sentences to be concise and direct.

To enable participants to write and edit sentences to be clear and precise.

Lecture/discussion:

You first should review the discussion in Chapter 8 of the manual, "Writing and Editing Sentences," to make sure that all of the participants understand the points discussed. In the discussion, you should make it clear that there usually isn't one "best" way to edit a sentence stylistically; grammatically correct versions can vary stylistically. At times, of course, there is only one correct way to edit a sentence (e.g., the possessive of "it" is "its" not "it's").

You should also point out how sentence editing is dependent upon the paragraph context. For example whether you edit a sentence to say, "Several reasons favor these heat exchangers," or to say, "These heat exchangers have three advantages," might depend on the paragraph pattern. The guidelines for writing and revising paragraphs in the manual say, "Maintain effective subject focus and subject-verb-object relationships" and "Use transitions and other devices to move clearly, logically, and smoothly from sentence to sentence." These guidelines will suggest subject focus either on "several reasons" or on "heat exchangers."

Your lecture also could include a survey of the sentence problems that have appeared in the participants' own reports. They have written two reports so far in the course, and you should have collected a list of all of the sentence problems you have identified to date. For the lecture/discussion, you can categorize these according to the categories in Chapter 8 of the manual. You can add additional categories to cover problems not discussed in the chapter, and make these additional lecture topics. This material will be useful in preparing lectures and workshops for subsequent courses.

You can subdivide this module on sentences into sub-modulues on grammar

and style, depending on the degree to which you need to concentrate on sentence-level concerns in the course. This will depend on the skills of the participants as well as on the perceptions of those skills by their managers and supervisors.

Workshop:

The participants should discuss revisions of the sentences in the assignment exercise. We suggest that two participants read their revision of each sentence, identifying the problem(s) and presenting solutions. The class members can then discuss alternatives.

An in-class workshop could involve the participants editing a passage of several paragraphs which contains a number of sentence-level problems. Paragraph-level editing is the only means of addressing some problems, such as unclear pronoun reference.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 8, "Writing and Editing Sentences."

Assignment:

Ask the participants to format or reformat sample reports and to prepare visuals for text passages. You can select sample reports from the yard and retype them without any formatting devices. Perhaps a one-page and two- or three-page report will be appropriate. Then ask the participants to format the reports as they think appropriate. (If you have wordprocessing networks, the reports can be put in a file the participants can copy and work with.)

A second exercise is to have the participants prepare a standard form or format for a yard report that currently has no standard format. Progress reports and minutes are examples of reports that can be standardized.

Preparing visuals requires you to find some appropriate report text passages that lend themselves to figures and tables to replace or supplement words. Also you might find examples where detailed drawings are used inappropriately (that is, for the convenience of the report writer rather than for the convenience of the report readers). In addition, your yard might have some types of reports, such as status reports, that can be put entirely into visual format. Specific exercises can be developed for specific

types of reports, such as repair or installation instructions.

Unit 10

Formatting and Visual Aids

Objectives:

To enable participants to format reports effectively.

To enable participants to use standard formats effectively.

To enable participants to use visuals to aid the reader.

Lecture/discussion:

You should review the formatting suggestions in Chapter 9 of the manual. If you have access to a wordprocessing program that can vary formats, you can prepare different versions of the same report for class analysis and discussion. In addition, you should collect various standard forms and formats used throughout the yard for class analysis and discussion. In some organizations we have found that some employees don't know how to fill in standard forms or use standard formats. We also have found inconsistent use of a standard form or format. Since any standard form or format should be used appropriately and consistently, you should try to establish a clear understanding of the use of each form and format.

Workshop:

Discuss the assignment on exercises on formatting and visuals. You should build up a file of formatting and visual aid workshop exercises to use in subsequent courses. Much formatting and use of visuals is a matter of standard practices in a shipyard, so generic workshop exercises such as preparing alternative graphs and charts from a set of data probably are inappropriate. You should encourage the participants to analyze current yard practices and propose improvements when these are suggested. Standard practices can be traditional rather than functional, the result of some former manager's decision or practice that can no longer be justified. Standard practices are efficient, however, especially within a yard.

Background Reading:

Writing Shipyard Reports, Chapter 9, "Using Visual Aids and Formatting Devices."

Assignment:

The participants should write or rewrite a report they actually have written or are writing on the job. If an individual participant has no current writing situation, he or she should write a report for a colleague, using material he or she knows intimately. They should bring multiple copies to the next session.

Unit 11

Report Writing Assessment Workshop

Objectives:

To improve report writing skills, especially those of audience analysis, formulation of purpose, establishing a basic structure, and preparing the heading and summary information.

To hone basic report editing skills.

To enhance the participants' critical evaluation skills.

Workshop:

This unit is a repeat of Unit 6: peer group evaluation of reports and report revision.

The assignment for this unit requires each participant to write his or her own report. For the workshop, divide the participants again into groups of four or five. Usually it is best to reform the groups rather than to have the same groups. Each group member is to receive and evaluate all of the groups reports. (Distribute these reports in advance of the workshop; if you don't, an hour needs to be set aside so that the participants can read and evaluate their group's reports.)

The workshop again consists of discussion of each participant's report by the group, according to the format you established for Unit 6. If you have a repetitive format, you will find that the discussion will be more productive the second time around because everyone knows what to expect.

As a guide for the discussion, the participants again should complete an evaluation form (Section 5) for each report in their group. You should ensure that any deficiencies in filling out this form in Unit 6 are remedied for Unit 11.

Assignment:

On the basis of the workshop discussion, each participant should rewrite and edit his or her report. At your discretion, you can evaluate these revisions yourself or else you can have a follow-up evaluation workshop. Multiple copies will be required

for the follow-up workshop. The follow-up workshop should have the participants in the same groups as the first workshop for this unit, as we mentioned before. The follow-up workshop will be an additional course unit.

A reminder: you should maintain a file of copies of all original and revised reports. This will be a valuable source of examples for this and subsequent courses. You also can collect samples of paragraphs and sentences that need editing and use them for workshops later in this course.

Unit 12

Assessing Report Writing Skills

Objective:

    To assess the participants' report writing skills.

Workshop:

    Write an impromptu report given the information provided. This is a post-test for you and the participants to compare with the pre-test impromptu report written for Unit 1.

    This unit is a repeat of the first unit. It can be the same assessment report used in the first unit (Section 6 of this *Guide*), in which case you and the participants can compare the before and after versions. If you already have evaluated the first assessment report with the participants, this assessment can be similar to the first, although with a different communication situation. (You can use the assignment in Section 6 as a model for preparing a post-test assignment.) The results still should be comparable.

5. Report Evaluation Checklist

With report writing guidelines as outlined in the manual, you can use a checklist based on these guidelines to evaluate a shipyard report. We think you also will find it extremely useful to have the participants evaluate each other's reports with a checklist. The units in the syllabus assume you will use the checklist approach as a means of structuring the small group report critique sessions.

Checklists provide a convenient shorthand way to critique a report and note areas for revision and editing. Rather than extensive annotation on a report or just general discussion of a report, you and the participants can use a checklist to focus on specific parts and characteristics of a report. In a small group critique session, the checklist technique quickly establishes areas of analysis upon which the participants agree--both positive and negative. It also establishes areas of disagreement, which usually stimulate constructive discussion.

Checklist items are quantitative items insofar as possible. They are phrased as characteristics that can be observed or evaluated by some objective criterion. This enables you and the participants to avoid "impressionistic" judgments that cannot be easily turned into constructive comments. To say that a paragraph seems "weak" or "illogical," for example, does not suggest how the paragraph can be improved. But to say that the paragraph has more than one main point or lacks a topic sentence up front is to identify a characteristic that can be specifically addressed in revision.

A useful exercise for the participants might be to prepare checklists for typical types of reports in the yard. This could be useful for the yard as well as the participants, as it provides a means of coordinating report writing practices.

An additional suggestion is to make managers and supervisors aware of the checklist. It provides a convenient means by which they can critique a report and note areas for revision and editing--if not of every report, then of selected reports. The checklist also provides a means for managers and supervisors to reinforce the instruction in the course. To use the checklist effectively, however, they need to be familiar with the manual and the contents of the course.

CHECKLIST FOR A SHIPYARD REPORT

Writer: _____   Evaluator : _____

		N	?	Y	n/a
1.	Heading and Distribution List: Identifies the primary and selected secondary audiences; includes necessary reference information and contract/drawing numbers.	—	—	—	—
2.	Subject Line: States the subject and purpose directly.	—	—	—	—
3.	Introduction (first paragraph): Succinctly states the organizational problem or need and states the purpose of the report.	—	—	—	—
4.	Summary of important material (second paragraph or section): Summarizes all important information concisely so that most readers have to read no further in the report.	—	—	—	—
5.	Discussion Arrangement (following paragraphs or sections): Arranges details clearly to explain and support the conclusions and important information in the summary.	—	—	—	—
6.	Discussion Selection: Presents only the details necessary to explain and support the conclusions.	—	—	—	—
7.	Attachments and References: Uses attachments for subordinate detail and references for unnecessary detail.	—	—	—	—
8.	Format and Visuals: Uses format cues and visuals to clarify the content and arrangement and to eliminate prose.	—	—	—	—
9.	Paragraphs and Paragraph Clusters: Each makes one point supported by particulars; puts the topic first; has a logical order of details; is adequately developed but not overloaded.	—	—	—	—
10.	Sentence Style: Sentences are direct, clear, and concise, without wordiness and indirect constructions; subjects and verbs are precise; standard word order is used.	—	—	—	—
11.	Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation: Sentences are grammatically and mechanically correct and usage is clear and unambiguous.	—	—	—	—
12.	Diction: Plain English is used.	—	—	—	—

Comments (continued on other side):

6. Assessing Report Writing Skills

Professional employees either individually or as a group can participate in this report writing skills assessment. They should be given an hour or so, but no more than an hour and a half, to write a letter or memorandum using the information in the assignment that follows. They should be encouraged to adapt the information according to the standard procedures as they know them in your yard.

In our "Syllabus for an In-House Course" this assignment provides the workshop for Unit 1 and is a pre-test of the participants' writing skills. As we suggest for Unit 12, it can also be used as a post-test, although you might want to develop a new impromptu report writing assignment for the post-test.

This assessment also can be used with new employees individually in order to assess whether or not they need instruction in report writing.

Any shipyard can prepare its own mechanism for assessing report writing skills based on this model. The objective is to have a standard assessment rather than an individual assessment of a professional employee's own writing. With the use of a standard assessment, the skills and achievements of each person can be compared with others as well as with sample models of effective letters and memoranda written for the assessment.

The participants' impromptu responses to the assignment should substantiate our assumption that there is no one "right" way of writing the letter or memorandum. We provide several sample responses, but others are possible and might even be preferable for your yard.

Our sample responses vary in format, tone, and content. Sample A is in a straightforward memorandum format, usually reserved for in-house memoranda but occasionally used between organizations that have a close or on-going business relationship. The tone is impersonal, abrupt, and implicitly legalistic. It is brief, with few details about the damage itself; it relies on the attachment for details.

Sample B is in a letter format. The tone is informal, constructive, and personal, suggesting a good business relationship between the two organizations. Selective details on the damage are presented, although the deficiency report is

attached.

      Sample C is in a combined memorandum/letter format sometimes used for working correspondence between organizations. The tone is businesslike, but not as accusatory as that of sample A . The report has a design that more clearly includes both summary and discussion units than do the designs of the other two samples, as the second paragraph presents generalizations supported by particulars in paragraphs three and four.

      The sample responses should elicit "yes" answers to most of the questions on the checklist, from grammar questions to heading questions. Many other responses might as well.

Report Writing Assignment

You are an engineer in the Quality Assurance Department at the American Shipbuilding Company, and you are responsible for Hull 324. Your manager is Stewart Luce. A subcontractor has damaged some windows. You are to write a memorandum or letter for your manager's signature. This letter will be sent to Charles Stuart, General Manager, of ACME Sandblasting and Painting Inc. Using the following information, write a report that requests corrective action or reimbursement by ACME Sandblasting and Painting Inc. for the damage caused by their work.

Contract Information

Contract No.:	SB-324-02 (Section XII - Responsibilities for Damage)
Hull No.:	324
Ship Type:	SWATH A-TSD
Client:	U.S. Navy
Yard Location:	South Yard, Way #3

Damage Information

Type:	Pitting of windows
Location:	Windows No. W-B01, 02, 03 - Bridge Deck starboard side: first three windows moving aft on the deck house.
Reference:	Drawing No. 324-108-09
Cause:	Sandblasting to prepare for painting of bridge deckhouse
Date:	July 12-15, 1986
Description:	W-B01 - 3 pits/in^2 on the right half of the window
	W-B02 - 5 pits/in^2 over the whole window
	W-B03 - 3 pits/in^2 on the left half of the window
	pits averaged - 1/32 in. deep
	largest pit - 1/16 in. deep

Actions Taken

Reported by: Bruce Anderson, Outfitting worker
Time: 1600, July 17, 1986
To: Sanford Tyler, supervisor

Inspected by: Robert Leibeck, Quality Assurance Inspector
Date: July 18, 1986

Quality Deficiency Report: #017-324
Date: July 18, 1986

Construction Notified: July 19, 1986
Contracts Notified: July 19, 1986
Purchasing Notified: July 19, 1986

- The windows make up the right side of the main viewing area on the bridge.

- Inspection of the damaged area can be carried out by a representative of the offending corporation.

- Corrective action or reimbursement must take place within four weeks after acceptance of the Quality Deficiency Report or an official notification of a contract grievance will be issued.

- Painting has been rescheduled from the week of August 4 to the week of August 25.

American Shipbuilding Corporation
Huron River Yard
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

File: 32C-10
Date: 19 July 1988

To: Charles Stuart
                General Manager
                ACME Sandblasting and Painting Inc.

From: Stewart Luce, Manager
                Quality Assurance Department
                American Shipbuilding Corporation

Subject: Replacement or Reimbursement for Damaged Windows

Attachment: Quality Deficiency Report #017-324

Reference: Contract No. SB-324-02, Section XII - *Responsibilities for Damage*

During sandblasting by ACME on July 12 through 15, 1988, several windows in the bridge deck area were damaged. Our inspection indicates that the sandblasting caused the damage. Therefore, we request that ACME Sandblasting and Painting either take corrective action or reimburse American Shipbuilding for the damage.

The sandblasting by your company caused heavy pitting in three windows in the main viewing area of the bridge. The details of the damage are in QDR #017-324 (attached).

This action is covered by Section XII, Contract SB-324-02 (reference). We believe that after your inspection of the area, you will agree that ACME Sandblasting and Painting Inc. is at fault. Please arrange for corrective action or reimbursement by August 18.

We would appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

xc: V. White, Quality Assurance
       C. Frederick, Contracts
       F. Domino, Construction
       J. Andrulis, Production

Specimen Impromptu Response A

American Shipbuilding Corporation
Huron River Yard
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

19 July 1988

Mr. Charles Stuart
General Manager
ACME Sandblasting and Painting, Inc.
Flint, MI 40001

Dear Mr. Stuart:

In preparation for the painting of Hull 324, your employees inadvertently damaged the first three windows, moving aft on the bridge deck starboard side. As a result of their sandblasting, each of the three windows was severely pitted. Would you please see that corrective action is taken by August 18th?

Robert Leibeck, an ASBC quality assurance inspector, examined the windows July 18th. He found that window W-B01 (see Drawing No. 324408-09) had 3 pits/in^2 on the right half of the window. Window W-B02 had 5 pits/in^2 over the entire window. Window W-B03 had 3 pits/in^2 covering the left half of the window. Pits were found as deep as 1/16 in; the average was 1/32 in.

We are requesting corrective action or reimbursement from your company. If action is not taken within four weeks, we will have to issue an official notification of a contract grievance. Feel free to send a representative to confirm the information in the Quality Deficiency Report. I am confident, though, that you will find this report to be accurate.

We have rescheduled the painting from August 9 to August 25 and would like to meet this new schedule.

Sincerely,

Stewart Luce, Manager
Quality Assurance Department

Enclosure: ASBC Quality Deficiency Report #017-324

Specimen Impromptu Response B

American Shipbuilding Corporation
Huron River Yard
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

File: 32C-10
Date: 19 July 1988
Contract: SB-324-02

To: Charles Stuart
           General Manager
           ACME Sandblasting and Painting Inc.

From: Stewart Luce, Manager
           Quality Assurance Department
           American Shipbuilding Corporation

Subject: Replacement of Damaged Windows

Dear Mr. Stuart,

As a result of sandblasting work performed by your company from July 12-15, 1988, on the SWATH A-TSD ship, significant damage was done to three windows on the deck house. In accordance with our contract (SB-324-02, Section XII), I ask that your company either repair the damage or reimburse the American Shipbuilding Company for replacement of these windows.

The damage occurred while sandblasting to prepare for painting of the bridge deckhouse. It caused serious pitting damage to three windows aft on the starboard side of the bridge deck. Painting cannot proceed until this damage has been repaired.

This damage is described in Quality Deficiency Report #017-324 dated July 18, 1988 (attached). The pitting consists of from 3 to 5 pits/in^2 on Windows W-B01, W-B02, and W-B03 (see enclosed Drawing #324-108-09). The pits averaged 1/32 inches deep, with the largest being 1/16 inch deep.

A representative of ACME Shipbuilding and Painting is welcome to perform an inspection of the damaged area. Your prompt action would be appreciated, as painting has been rescheduled from the week of August 4 to the week of August 25.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stewart Luce

Copy: V. White
           Quality Assurance

Encl: Quality Deficiency Report #017-324
           Drawing #324-108-09

Specimen Impromptu Response C

Appendix A
Questionnaire: Important Types of
Written Communication in Shipyards

We used the following questionnaire for our interviews with shipyard managers, engineers, and other professionals. We interviewed 53 persons in four shipyards, with most interviews scheduled for an hour. (This commitment of time by shipyard personnel is an indication of their concern for effective report writing.)

The questionnaire was forwarded to most interviewees in advance so that they could familiarize themselves with the specific topics we would discuss with them in the interview. A few actually completed the questionnaire in advance of the interview. We completed most of the questionnaires ourselves, however, during the interviews. In this way, we were able to collect detailed information about the purposes and audiences of the types of communication the interviewees listed.

Much of the material in *Writing Shipyard Reports* is based on the information we gathered during the interviews, including sample reports. Some of this is summarized in "Report Writing Needs," Section 2 of this *Guide*.

We provide the questionnaire in case you wish to use it with participants in an in-house course in report writing, as suggested for Unit 2 of the syllabus.

IMPORTANT TYPES OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Written communication performs important intra-organizational and inter-organizational functions. This communication is important for decision making and for other means of maintaining and increasing shipyard efficiency and productivity. What types of written communication are important for your department and your job role? List up to three in each category.

Communications Issued From the Department

1. Type of communication (explain in terms of organizational function, that is, what the communication is supposed to accomplish for the organization):

2. Type of communication (in terms of organizational function):

3. Type of communication (in terms of organizational function):

Communications Received By the Department

1. Type of communication (explain in terms of departmental function, what the communication is supposed to do for you or your department):

2. Type of communication (in terms of departmental function):

3. Type of communication (in terms of departmental function):

Comments on Effectiveness of These Communications

FUNCTIONS OF SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONS

Identify specific examples of important types of communication and explain their specific functions.

Communication 1

Type of communication:

Subject line or topic of this communication:

Specific purpose(s) of this communication:

Specific audiences for this communication, identified by roles:
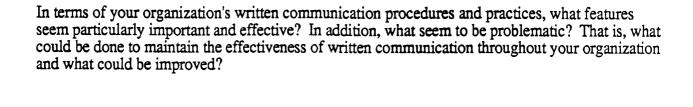
Uses of this communication:

Communication 2

Type of communication:

Subject line or topic of this communication:

Specific purpose(s) of this communication:

Specific audiences for this communication, identified by roles:

Uses of this communication:

Additional Specific Examples

3.

4.

FEATURES OF A SPECIMEN COMMUNICATION

Select a specimen written communication (or perhaps two--one issued by you or your department and one received by you or your department) that seems relevant and important.

1. What features of this document seem particularly effective in terms of its function?

2. What features of this document seem to inhibit its effectiveness?

3. What features of other specimens seem especially useful or problematic?

SUMMARY COMMENTS

In terms of your organization's written communication procedures and practices, what features seem particularly important and effective? In addition, what seem to be problematic? That is, what could be done to maintain the effectiveness of written communication throughout your organization and what could be improved?

If at all possible, could you provide copies of a few representative written communications for in-depth analysis of the design and writing? Any such examples will be treated as strictly confidential and used only in accordance with your stipulations.