Module 8: Workshop overview

Agenda

9:00 am	Module 8: Workshop overview
9:15	Module 9: How to review a draft to prepare to mentor the writer
10:00	Module 10: How to provide feedback that can be heard and used
10:30	Module 11: How to provide follow-up assignments after giving feedback
11:00	Break
11:15	Module 12: How to decide when to mentor a writer and when to rewrite the document yourself
12:00 pm	Lunch
12:30	Module 13: How to evaluate writing performance as part of annual performance review
1:15	Wrap-up and evaluation
1:30	Adjourn

What does "mentoring a writer" mean to you?

_____

_____

_____

Module 9: How to review a draft to prepare to mentor the writer

Use your time efficiently by choosing three focus points in the document.

Document	Focus point 1	Focus point 2	Focus point 3
Proposal (section)			
Report (section)			
Email			
Methodology			
Narrative			
Interview summary			
Experience summary			

Module 10: How to provide feedback that can be heard and used

Best practices for giving feedback in person

1. **Trying to improve the writer's skills? Give the feedback in person.**

   _____

   _____

2. **Be prepared:**

   • Don't give feedback on any document you're reading for the first time.
   • Know which issues you will help the writer fix and which issues you want the writer to fix on his or her own.

3. **Consider using an editing checklist to guide the feedback session.**

4. **Ensure you and the writer each have hard copies of everything you're discussing.** Don't share copies.

   _____

   _____

5. **Pause during the feedback session to give the writer a chance to make notes.** Suggest the writer make notes if he or she isn't doing so.

   _____

   _____

Module 10: How to provide feedback that can be heard and used

Consider using an editing checklist

✔	**Plain language**
☐	1. **Anticipate and answer readers' questions**.
☐	2. **Consider the reader's level of technical expertise and depth of interest**. Know when to explain technical topics, how to use the right amount of detail, and when to avoid jargon.
✔	**Information quality**
☐	3. **Provide supporting details**.
☐	4. **Cite sources properly**.
✔	**Structure and organization**
☐	5. **Present information in a logical sequence**.
☐	6. **Use section headings or transition words or phrases to cue the reader**.
☐	7. **Follow the structure and organization standards for the document type.**
✔	**Sentences**
☐	8. **Use active voice** most of the time.
☐	9. **Make sure subjects and verbs agree**.
☐	10. **Write clear, relatively short sentences**.
✔	**Correctness**
☐	11. **Use correct punctuation**.
☐	12. **Use correct grammar**.
☐	13. **Present numbers correctly**.
✔	**Proofreading**
☐	14. **Run MS Word spell check and grammar check**. Correct errors before anyone else reads your draft.
☐	15. **Comply with rules and styles listed in Westat's style guide**, including capitalization, abbreviations and units, and bullets.
☐	16. **Ask for editors' or colleagues' input or clarification**, when necessary.

Module 10: How to provide feedback that can be heard and used

How to avoid causing a defensive reaction

1. **Ask sincere, open-ended questions about how the writer was thinking about the document as she wrote it:**

   • _____

   • _____

2. **Use metaphor to explain what is wrong with the draft or how you want the writer to fix it.** Metaphors make feedback less emotional and may bridge the distance between people who see writing differently.

   Practice by developing a metaphor you could use to help Douglas Dunn (page 3).

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. **Reconsider the common feedback sequence: positive > negative > positive.**

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. **Avoid doing things that cause writers to defend themselves:**

   • _____

   • _____

   • _____

Module 11: How to provide follow-up assignments after giving feedback

- **For writers who need to make big-picture changes, provide follow-up assignments on a separate page or in another channel.**

- **Don't use Track Changes or Comments on the draft for follow-up assignments.**

| Feedback Follow-up Form |
|---|
| **What are the three most important changes you will make to this draft document?**

   A. _____

   B. _____

   C. _____ |
| **In what order will you make these changes?**

   _____ 1.

   _____ 2.

   _____ 3. |
| **Due dates for the revisions:**

   • _____

   • _____ |

Module 12: How to decide when to mentor a writer and when to rewrite the document yourself

Where's the flaw in this statement? "I mentor the writer if the schedule allows, but I rewrite the document myself if the deadline is looming."

_____

_____

Come up with alternatives to strict either/or thinking about mentoring vs. rewriting the document yourself.

With your coaching, writer makes all the changes   **You rewrite the document yourself**
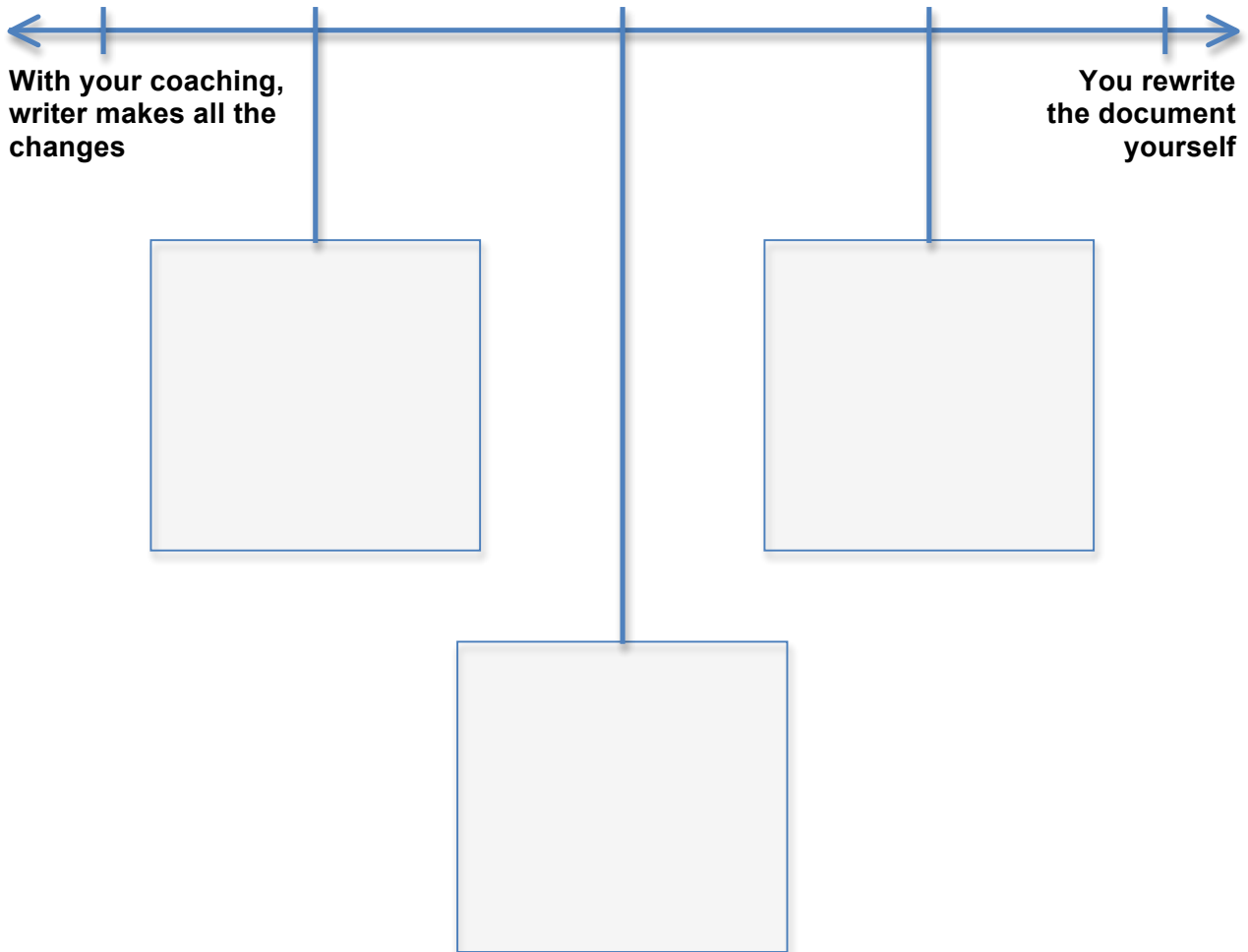
Module 13: How to evaluate writing performance as part of annual performance review

Open discussion on Westat managers' practices:

1. **How do you weigh performance on individual writing projects and sum up performance over an entire year?**

   _____

   _____

2. **How do you ensure you have evaluated writing fairly?**

   _____

   _____

3. **How do you describe writing performance to the staff member in a manner that accurately reflects individual strengths and weaknesses?**

   _____

   _____

For discussion: Sample Annual Performance Plan with writing requirements

Critical Element 3
Weight: X Single (X1) Double (X2) Triple (X3)
Description: Writes articles, reports, and/or documentation
Goal Linkage: ABC Agency Goal 1 - Transform Our Industry; ABC Agency Goal 2 – Serve our Customers

Job Performance Outcomes/Expectations:

- With minimal guidance, prepares articles, reports, and/or documentation related to our industry sector and our industry energy demand.
- Ensures that all articles and reports, including any associated graphics, are prepared consistent with the ABC Agency style guide and graphics templates (available at http://ABCIntranet/resources.gov), clearly explain the material being discussed, are generally free of numeric or grammatical errors, are responsive to reviewer comments and are completed according to agreed upon schedules.
- Prepares a minimum of three industry-related articles for online publication, "Our Industry Today."
- Develops and/or contributes to research papers on our industry topics according to schedules set via discussion with Team Leader and senior management.
- In a calendar year, prepares market trends and/or Issues in Focus articles consistent with the report schedule.
- Provides draft material for the model documentation for the Industry Demand Module by 90 days after final data analysis.
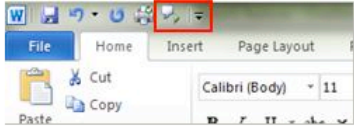- Prepares deliverables, including a research paper on our industry's resources by [date].

Resource: How to use MS Word tools for proofreading

1. Have Word read your text to you.

Add Speak to the Quick Access Toolbar

You can add the Speak command to your Quick Access Toolbar by doing the following:

1. Next to the Quick Access Toolbar, click **Customize Quick Access Toolbar.**

2. Click **More Commands**.

3. In the **Choose commands from** list, select **All Commands**.

4. Scroll down to the **Speak** command, select it, and then click **Add**.

5. Click **OK**.

6. When you want to use the text-to-speech command, click the icon on the Quick Access Toolbar.

⬆ Top of Page

Convert text to speech

After you have added the **Speak** command to your Quick Access Tool, you can hear single words or blocks of text spoken by highlighting the text you want to hear, and then clicking the **Speak** command.

https://support.office.com/en-ie/article/Using-the-Speak-text-to-speech-feature-459e7704-a76d-4fe2-ab48-189d6b83333c

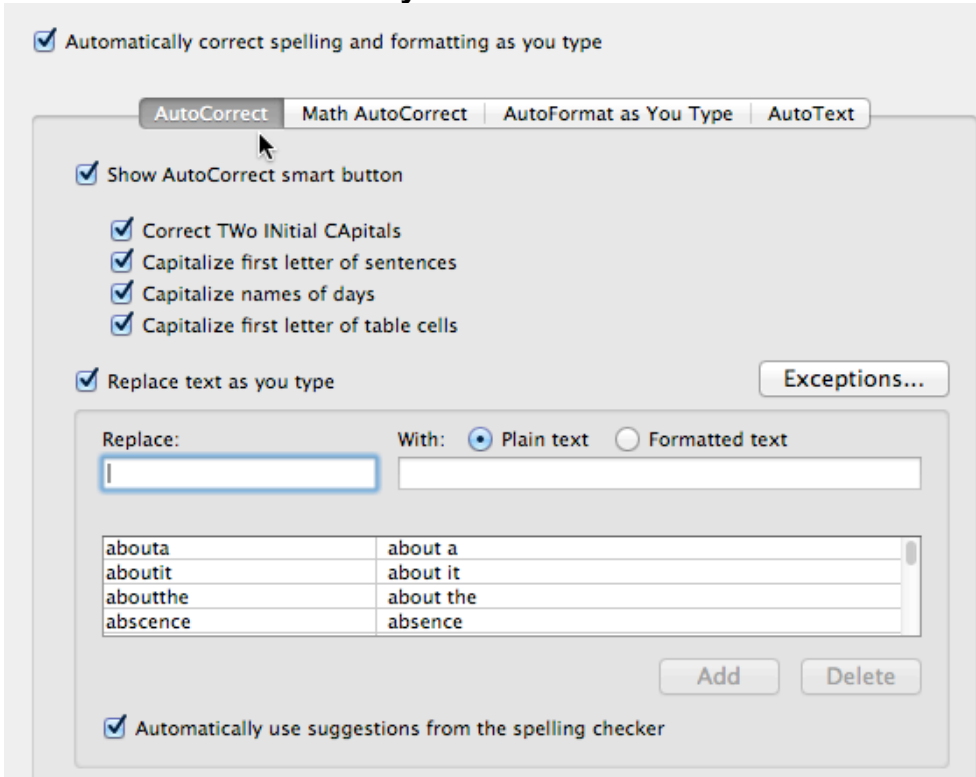**Try it! Does Speak help you find the errors in these samples?**

The condensing furnace is the more efficient type, meaning they reuse some of the heat that normally would have been vented out of the home.

The average daily percentage change for the front month WTI crude oil contract was close to zero and daily price movements had a standard deviation of more than 2%.

Skyrocketing charges for data preparation, the need to keep pace with rapidly increasing amounts of data, and requirements for fast system response has led to a search for more efficient input devices.

Resource: How to use MS Word tools for proofreading

2. Use autocorrect fully.

☑ Automatically correct spelling and formatting as you type

| AutoCorrect | Math AutoCorrect | AutoFormat as You Type | AutoText |

☑ Show AutoCorrect smart button

☑ Correct TWo INitial CApitals
☑ Capitalize first letter of sentences
☑ Capitalize names of days
☑ Capitalize first letter of table cells

☑ Replace text as you type   Exceptions...

Replace: With: ⊙ Plain text   ○ Formatted text

abouta	about a
aboutit	about it
aboutthe	about the
abscence	absence

Add   Delete

☑ Automatically use suggestions from the spelling checker
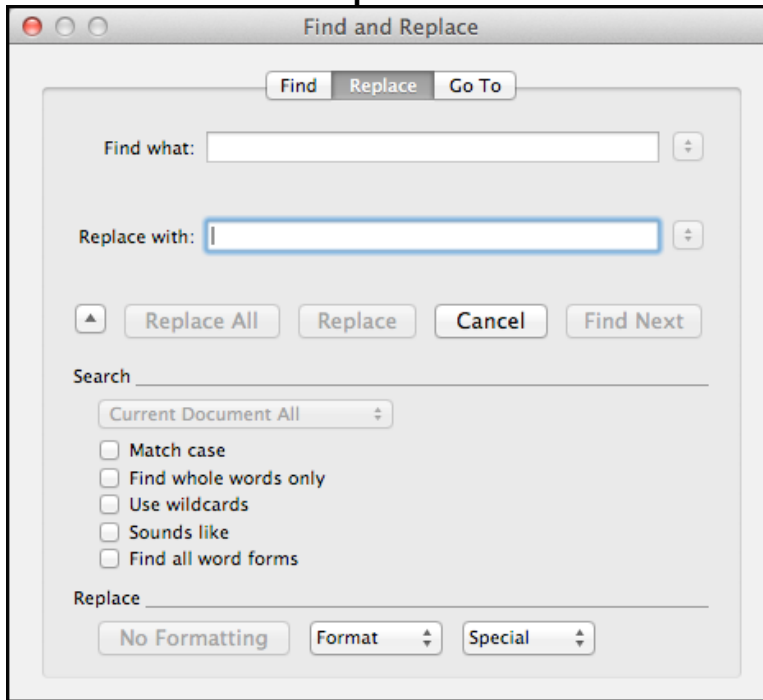
List three of your common keyboarding errors. Could fuller use of AutoCorrect help you fix these errors?
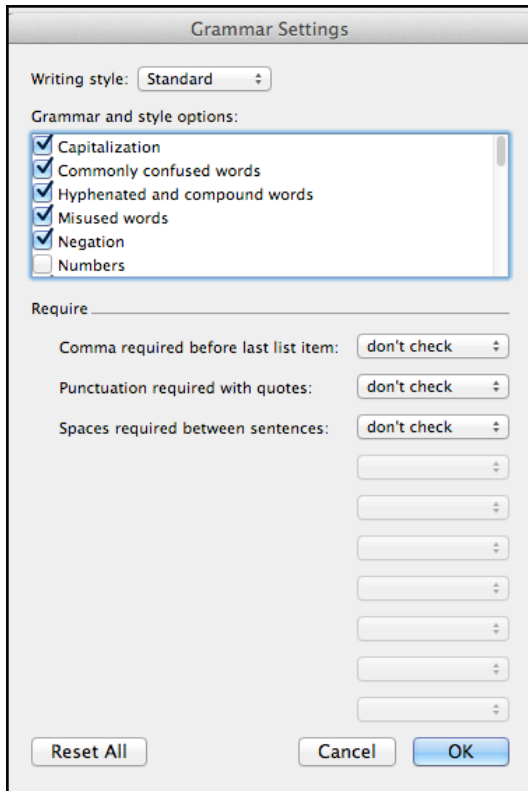
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

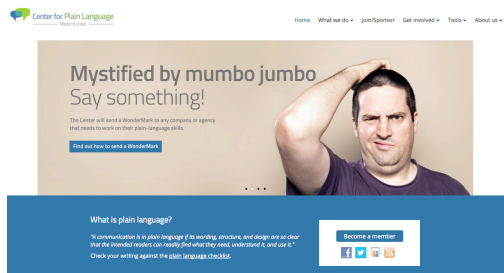Resource: How to use MS Word tools for proofreading

4. Use Find and Replace.

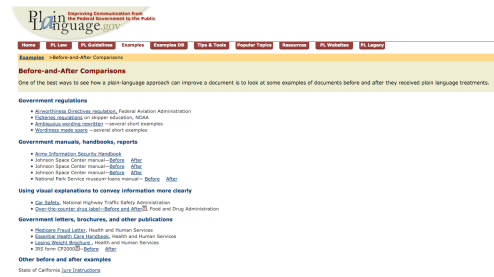### 4. Use more of the Grammar and Style settings.

Resource: Plain language websites and training

http://centerforplainlanguage.org

http://www.plainlanguage.gov

List of free online plain language courses

- **Free Govloop Academy class**
  https://academy.govloop.com/courses/plain-language/

- **NIH plain language online training**
  http://plainlanguage.nih.gov/CBTs/PlainLanguage/login.asp

- **From the Center for Plain Language**
  http://centerforplainlanguage.org/guidelines-and-tools/

- **Free online training on Plainlanguage.gov**
  http://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/take_training/index.cfm

- **Webinars from DigitalGov University**
  http://find.digitalgov.gov/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&affiliate=digitalgov&query=plain+language&commit=Search

- **FCC**
  https://www.fcc.gov/fcc-web-based-training/plain-language