**DO YOU LOVE NEEDLESS PHRASES?**

Writers often use phrases that don’t add to their writing. They put them in every document, and think they’re using good writing technique and good communication. Turn them loose with a letter or memo, and some will use one to begin every paragraph.

**Readers skip those phrases completely**, and may turn the topic (and us) off at the same time.

Did you ever begin a paragraph with one of these?

* “I would like to tell you that…”
* “Someone has said that…”
* “I just learned that…”
* “Please be advised that…”
* “You will want to know that…”
* “The purpose of this (letter) is to tell you that…”

If you can capitalize the first word following these phrases, you can eliminate them. The remaining words will contain a complete thought (the only thought you need to communicate), and make up a complete sentence.

These needless phrases add unnecessary extra words to our writing, and **make it more difficult to get our intended message to the reader**. We wouldn’t use them if we thought in terms of writing conversationally, as if we were actually speaking to our reader.

Can you imagine walking up to someone and saying, **“Please be advised that it’s time for lunch”?** That person would probably run away as fast as possible! What do we say instead? **“It’s time for lunch.”** That’s the message. And “please be advised” adds nothing. (Lawyers, beware!)

Now that I’ve had my say, I still recommend using these phrases at one step of the writing process. When you’re freewriting, getting your words out as fast as you can, don’t worry about using a phrase like that. If you’re stuck for what to say, begin by writing **“I would like to tell you that,”** or **“You will want to know that,”** or even (horrors!) **“Please be advised that…”** You’ll have to finish what you started, and these phrases can trigger your main idea. They can help you get started writing.

But like the booster rocket on the space shuttle, once they’ve done their job and “launched” your writing into “orbit,” you can cut them loose and let them fall away. You don’t need them, and your readers will thank you!

Jonathan Clarke: Business Writing Solutions

http://www.businesswritingsolutions.com/blog/do-you-love-needless-phrases