

Communication Audit: Proposals & Recommendations

Name: _____ Topic: _____ Rater: _____

A. Content & Argument Impact	
1. Anticipate & address typical audience questions /concerns (use Comm. Planning Tool)....	0 1 2 3 4 5
2. Support statements, with reasons, i.e., proof, concrete examples, and/or quantitative info	0 1 2 3 4 5
3. Compose an executive summary, providing a clear overview that allows busy executive to see the entire big picture and make a decision after reading only your executive summary	0 1 2 3 4 5
4. Compose problem segment that clearly defines major problem(s), exigencies, relevant issues, decision-makers' concerns/constraints, and leads to your proposed solution.....	0 1 2 3 4 5
5. Compose objective segment, that explains proposal's measurable financial objectives	0 1 2 3 4 5
6. Compose solutions segment that clearly describes your solution(s), shows how solution resolves the problem(s), and shows the decision maker the results (outcomes) & benefits	0 1 2 3 4 5
7. Compose an action plan segment, describing the procedures, implementations, timeline.	0 1 2 3 4 5
8. Compose financial segment that explains costs, profits, prudent funding arrangements	0 1 2 3 4 5
9. Request the specific action(s) you want (approval, contact, meeting) in closing argument	0 1 2 3
B. Structural & Organizational Impact	
10. Use the typical problem/solution organizational approach to facilitate readability.....	0 1 2 3
11. Use key-word headings/subheadings above sections (Problem: Solution: Risks:) to help predict content <u>AND</u> a talking message so reader learns segment's most important point	0 1 2 3 4
12. Start segments with advanced organizer paragraph that overviews section's major points	0 1 2 3
13. Frontload the most important sentence so it becomes the 1st sentence of each paragraph	0 1 2 3
C. Tone & Writing Style Impact	
14. Delete unnecessary words/phrases/sentences to create complete & concise paragraphs	0 1 2 3
15. Use active voice, containing an actor or agency as the subject performing the action.....	0 1 2 3
16. Choose strong action-oriented verbs, replacing weak verbs like is, was, are, have, has, be	0 1 2 3
17. Use the inclusive "you/your/our" writing attitude to create person-to-person/team style	0 1 2 3
18. Adopt a professional style, concerned approach, and an easy, conversational tone.....	0 1 2 3
19. Use encouraging, positive language--avoid threatening language & any negative tone.....	0 1 2 3
20. Use a reader-focused point-of-view that shows reader's benefits--avoiding writer POV	0 1 2 3
21. Check mechanics: use standard American grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation..	0 1 2 3
D. Layout & Design Impact	
22. Provide a succinct title page that explains the purpose of your document to any reader....	0 1 2
23. Identify intended audience & source on the first page to target readers & allow follow-up	0 1 2
24. Date document so readers can determine the proposal's relevancy or currentness.....	0 1 2
25. Use a readable sized serif font in the body of your document (e.g., Bookman @ 11-12 pts)	0 1 2
26. Feature segment headings, & subheadings in varied, larger sizes to speed locating info	0 1 2
27. Limit sentences to 20 words or less to allow readers to rapidly parse & store idea in STM	0 1 2
28. Limit paragraphs to 2-6 sentences to allow readers to rapidly parse & store ideas in LTM	0 1 2
29. Use single spacing between lines in paragraphs,& 1 1/2 spacing for any bullet highlights	0 1 2
30. Use bullets--although sparingly--to call attention to important points you need to make	0 1 2
31. Make margins 3/4"-1" & leave right-hand margin unjustified to reduce eye strain	0 1 2
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