

## 7 writing tips from RHETORICA® — a toolkit of 21 everyday writing techniques

### TOP TIP #5: How to write concisely

When I ask people on my writing workshops what they most want to improve about their writing, nine times out of ten they say ‘conciseness’ (they also use words like ‘waffle’, ‘wordiness’ and ‘wind’).

The solution is simple: the single best way to write concisely is to omit redundant or needless words.

Words that add no value, content, meaning or information elongate your sentences and puff up your text. Remove them. When we write concisely, we create prose that is taut, lean and delivers what I call ‘cut-through’. Its ASL (Average Sentence Length, in words) is also lower.

Here’s how easy this is:

<b>Wordy</b>	<b>Concise</b>
<i>The team is made up of five people</i>	<i>The team comprises five people (37% shorter) N.B. comprises, NOT comprises of; you could also say consists of, but that’s longer.</i>
<i>A significant reduction in incidents</i>	<i>Far fewer incidents (40% shorter)</i>
<i>The majority of students</i>	<i>Most students (50% shorter)</i>
<i>Have a detrimental effect on</i>	<i>Hurt, harm, damage (80% shorter)</i>
<i>Staff training is reviewed on a weekly basis every Tuesday</i>	<i>We review staff training every Tuesday (40% shorter)</i>