

These examples were obtained from:

<https://www.anl.gov/education/features-of-good-scientific-writing>

Example 1

Problem: The sentence is awkward and ambiguous because the reader does not know to whom “it” is referring.

Good Example:

“If possible, a three-zone approach should be used to plant buffers (Correll, 2005).” OR “Correll (2005) recommends using a three-zone approach to plant buffers, if possible.”

Why these work: The last two examples finally tell us who the “it” is, making the sentence more clear. When making claims in scientific writing that do not constitute general knowledge, always cite sources for the purpose of accuracy and clarity.

Example 2

Problem: This paragraph is not cohesive because the subject of the paragraph switches between sentence 1 and sentence 2 without a clear transition. The subject of the first sentence is “international policies.” The subject of the second sentence is “harvested wood products.” Until we read the last phrase of the final sentence, we have no idea how the two subjects might be related.

Good Example:

“International policies like the Kyoto Protocol have emphasized the need to increase efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon storage in non-atmospheric pools. One way carbon is stored is through harvested wood products, which include all wood materials that leave a forest after a harvest. These products, which already play an important role in shipping and manufacturing, now have a role to play in advancing global environmental initiatives.”

Why this works: This paragraph is more cohesive because it is clear how each sentence links to one another. The second sentence draws from the information provided in the first sentence (specifically the reference to carbon storage) to introduce HWP. Similarly, the final sentence links back to the topic of the very first sentence (the international policies).

Example 3

Problem: The phrase “execute daily activities in response to workplace issues” is so broad in meaning that it fails to tell us anything meaningful about the work the author performed.

Good Example:

“As a civil engineering intern, I worked with the Facilities Management Services Division to investigate over 500 signs based on their reflectivity and compliance with federal guidelines.” (26 words)

Why this works: By replacing the very general phrase “execute daily activities in response to workplace issues” with language that is more specific, the writing is more to-the-point, helping to advance the narrative and make it more compelling to read.