Business Writing Tip ##144—Four Fixes to Increase Clarity

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In past tips I've mentioned clarity. You want your business writing to be clear and easily understandable. You don't want to make your reader work hard to interpret what it is that you are trying to say. Past posts in this series suggest that you can improve clarity by:

- Selecting the right words
- Writing short to medium length sentences
- Making sure that your subjects and verbs are close together
- Checking that it is clear who or what pronouns are referring to

But there are other ways to communicate your meaning.

Here are my top Four Fixes to Increase Clarity.

1. Use images	Use graphs and charts to describe trends, pictures to highlight or illustrate aspects of your text. For example, if you're referring to a particular component in a technical document, include an image of the component rather than just naming it.
2. Use tables	Tables help organise the information and highlight important points. They help the reader choose what they want to read. For example, in the table, the title in the left column gives basic information. The reader can then choose if they want further information and read or ignore the right column.
3. Use lists	I've covered this in a previous tip. To write a list you need to focus on the main points, and then your list helps people quickly skim through information.
4. Use examples	Illustrate your point with a concrete example. Often people find it easier to understand an example, rather than an abstract concept.

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