



10 Rules to Fight Wordiness

(Sample Chapter from F1GMAT's Winning MBA Essay Guide)

[Buy Winning MBA Essay Guide](#)



Wordiness is a guilty pleasure for publishers with little consequence unless we overindulge and lose our audience. In your case, wordiness will decide whether you fit the essay within the recommended word limit or you annoy the MBA Admissions team.

Some MBA online applications have systems in place to cut the excess words. The last minute edits just before uploading the essay can remove the core of your essay.

You can fight wordiness in MBA essays with the following techniques:

1) Two Sentence Rule

A technique that we found effective in real time editing is the two-sentence rule; you write two sentences freely, pause for a moment, and then re-read the sentences. With this, you will immediately spot unnecessary phrases, words, and complex sentences. Editing is delayed just enough to distance yourself from your creation.

2) Look for Redundancies

The easiest wordiness fixes are redundancies in phrases, words, or expressions. If you had used a non-regular word, do not repeat them within a 2-paragraph radius. As readers, we remember in 100-word chunks. Once we grasp the concept in the paragraph, we refresh our memory and consume the next flow of words.

3) Make it Conversational

When we say, “make your essays more conversational,” most applicants edit and turn their essays into personal blog posts or overdo them with dialogues. What we mean by conversational is avoiding all the common phrases used in formal writing “with regard to,” “on a regular basis”, “at this point in time,” “in order to,” and the list goes on.



You can replace these phrases with one word:

“With regard to” – about

“On a regular basis” – regularly

“At this point in time” – now

“In order to” - to

4) Three Proposition Guideline

We love and regularly use proposition in our articles. It gives us a certain rhythm and simplicity in writing, but MBA Application Essays require a different approach. The regular use of proposition can add up, and contribute 20-25% towards the word count. Avoid this by using the three-proposition rule; use up to three propositions in a sentence.

To follow the rule, combine the propositional phrases to adjective-noun format whenever possible.

‘I was part of the team’ to “I was a team member.”

On first edit, it gives the impression that the flow is getting affected but once you go through the whole editing process, you will understand why smaller sacrifices in the flow is essential for making the larger point about your candidacy.

5) Remove Past Tense Additives

Essays require you to introspect, and connect two events. When an applicant indulges in the past tense, the natural tendency is to add more words



I entered the team meeting and made a recommendation, *"People in the team need assurance that the issue of their performance review is handled in a professional manner."*

Do not eliminate all past tenses but watch out for word fillers.

I entered the team meeting and made a recommendation, *"People in the team need assurance that their performance review is handled professionally."*

You removed 6 words in just one sentence.

6) Remove Secondary Facts

When you write the first draft, the secondary facts seem untouchable but once you near the application deadline, the inevitable fact edits will happen. There are no hard and fast rules for removing secondary facts. Remove the secondary fact, and see if the elimination affects context. It will certainly impact the narrative but given a choice between context and narrative; the former is much more important.

"The 3-member team pushed through a non-stop 48-hour coding Marathon, fixing the bugs, sleeping in our conference room with a make-shift 3x5 feet single bed, and strategically using the sleep time to meet the 1st August Deadline."

Categorize facts to primary and secondary:

Primary Facts

3-Member

48-hour

Secondary Facts

3x7 feet

1st August



3-Member proves the limitation of the team size, and 48-hour shows a sense of urgency to the deadline. Both are essential facts. If you remove 1st August, it doesn't impact the narrative, but if you remove 3x5 feet, you will fail to capture the sense of sacrifice completely, but 'Single Bed', and 'make-shift' demonstrates that the bed was uncomfortable. The balance between context and narrative is crucial in a 350 and 500-word essay.

The rewritten essay looks like:

"The 3-member team pushed through a non-stop 48-hour coding Marathon, fixing the bugs, sleeping in our conference room with a make-shift single bed, and strategically using the sleep time to meet the Deadline."

7) Choose Extreme Qualifiers Carefully

When we are writing an article about fighting wordiness, the narrative is filled with warnings and recommendations. Warnings by definition need extreme qualifiers.

"If you remove 1st August, it doesn't impact the narrative, but if you remove 3x5 feet, you will fail to capture the sense of sacrifice completely."

In essays, you should never give advice to the Admission team. Even life lessons should have a less preachy tone. Read the essay for '**extremely, very, completely, entirely, really, rather, fairly and other extreme qualifiers**', and remove it without any pre-judgment. Now read the sentence again. We bet the removal had no impact on the tone or context of the essay.

8) One Syllable words = Simplicity

When you are asked to write a diary, with no expert reviews to follow, the words, you use, are simple with one syllable. The moment you are aware



that you are writing for a Business School, flowery phrases, and complex words make a special appearance.

If you are not sure whether you can write an essay with just one-syllable words, take note of these words: **act, add, brand, chance, ask, back, fast, has, had, have, chat, last, pass, when, text, test, them, best, check, edge, met, next, sell, set, end, fell, else, hurt, curb, turn, learn, search, world, and worst.**

The list is a partial set of a large range of One Syllable Words that you can use in your essay writing. When you use One Syllable words, the points are made clearly devoid of any Jargons.

It is impossible to stick to the one syllable rule, but with an active awareness of the rule, **“simplicity = one syllable words”**, the wordiness in your essay will go down.

9) Sentence Length Diversity

Diversity of sentence length improves readability, but the awareness that you can vary the sentence length enables you to use simple words. Applicants feel the limitation in expressing their thoughts when they follow some rigid rule on sentence length.

25-word/sentence as an ideal length is a commonly held myth.

The word processing tools that summarizes sentence length, paragraph length and total word count do not take into consideration your ability to diversify sentence length.

Don't force your thoughts with a one-length rule, but follow the **“One Idea in One Paragraph”** rule.



10) Avoid Jargons When in Doubt

Jargons save word count, but applicants tend to overuse it. Use Jargons according to the knowledge and exposure of the essay reviewer. The term Information Technology (IT) will not puzzle a reviewer who has a graduate level education. Jargons that reveal the function require no explanation. Problem arises when understanding Jargons require some level of functional knowledge.

Banking, IT, and Pharma dominate the industries with the most Jargons. The term 'Asset Management' gives the reviewer a broader understanding of the job function, but if the entire essay is about professional achievement, explaining Asset Management becomes a necessity.

If you have any doubt that the Jargon is inconclusive, explain it in a simple sentence.

(Sample Chapter from F1GMAT's Winning MBA Essay Guide)

[Buy Winning MBA Essay Guide](#)