Writing Guidelines
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Generally the goal of written assignments is to demonstrate that you understand a particular concept and/or understand how to apply that concept to a situation or problem. Ask yourself if your paper demonstrates your familiarity with the material to the reader. Here are some things I look out for in students’ papers:

- A logical flow of ideas from introduction to supporting ideas to conclusion. You should not be drawing conclusions that are not supported by your evidence. There should be smooth transitions between ideas.
- Sections, headings, and subheadings. Business writing is not great literature. It’s not poetry or high prose. It is designed to communicate ideas that managers, employees and customers can use to make decisions. Sections make it easier to follow your flow of ideas.
- By the same token, Keep It Simple Student. Avoid metaphors, allegory, analogy, emblem, image, metonymy, personification, simile, similitude, symbol, trope, etc. Shorter is always better. Never try to stretch out a paper to make it longer. Never use lofty language or expressions that you don’t understand.
- On the other hand use professional as opposed to conversational language: words and expressions like “gonna,” “ain’t,” “finna,” “might could” and “y’all” might be acceptable in conversation but not in writing.
- Avoid typos, spelling errors, etc. Spell-check and proofread.
- Check your grammar and language! Make sure the tenses matched and that verbs agrees with their subjects.
- Be sure you complete the assignment – after you have fulfilled all of the requirements of the assignment then you can be creative. Creativity is a good thing but make sure that you first of all demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and ideas.
- Analysis is different from summary. It certainly means more than using a word in a sentence. Analysis means looking at meaning, comparison, contrast, relationships, etc. See Bloom’s Taxonomy for more on this.
- Companies are singular entities. Thus they cannot be described with the words “they,” “them,” or “their.” A company is “it.”
- Likewise, when referring to one person it is inappropriate to use “they,” “them,” or “their.” Use “he,” “she” “he/she,” or “he or she.”
- Know the difference between “there” and “their;” “are” and “our;” “where” and “were;” “diversity” and “diversification;” “led” and “lead;” “man” and “manager.”
- Know how to use apostrophes. There is a difference between “companies,” “company’s” and “companies’."
- On group assignments it is customary to list the names of the group members in alphabetical order by last name.
- Wikipedia is not an appropriate reference source, especially for graduate students!

1 Note that these are my personal guidelines and expectations. Other faculty members may have slightly different standards.