

Exercises in concision

Principles for writing concisely

1. Omit redundant pairs (e.g., *full and complete* → *complete*).
2. Omit redundant modifiers (e.g., *sudden crisis* → *crisis*).
3. Omit redundant categories (e.g., *in an efficient way* → *efficiently*).
4. Omit meaningless modifiers (e.g., *for all intents and purposes*).
5. Don't belabor the obvious.
6. Omit irrelevant detail.
7. Replace wordy phrases with single words (e.g., *in the event that* → *if*).
8. Reduce metadiscourse.
9. Don't hedge excessively.
10. Avoid double negatives.

Some exercises – make these sentences more concise

1. Critics cannot avoid employing complex and abstract technical terms if they are to successfully analyze literary texts and discuss them in a meaningful way.

2. Not until a resolution between Catholics and Protestants in regard to the authority of papal supremacy is reached will there be a start to a reconciliation between these two Christian religions.

3. The humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus, who wrote *The Praise of Folly* as well as other works in Latin about the general problems faced by people in his time period, was not unfriendly with his contemporary Thomas More, an Englishman whose book about the ideal commonwealth, *Utopia*, shows certain resemblances in some points to Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*.

4. [From an article in today's *Collegian* on last year's Hobart Hoedown:] A number of students at the riot felt the action taken by police was unjustified or was too severe. Many indicated that they felt the police incited the riot. Others said that the police presence made it impossible to leave the scene, despite demands for their dispersal. Officers attempting to quell the riot beat students with clubs, sprayed them in the face with pepper spray, threatened them or cursed at them. One student who spoke to *The Collegian* said he felt he was arrested unjustly.