



EDITING CHECKLIST FOR STRAT COMM STUDENTS

As you proceed through the semester you'll find that all your JOUR 301 lessons will come back to haunt you. The following checklist is just a little reminder of problems to look for in your writing. Go through it with each assignment. It will make your final product better and it will facilitate the final edit if you choose to bring your work to the Bremner Editing Center, 110 S-F.

- ___ Commas and periods go **inside** the quotations marks. ALWAYS! No Exceptions!
"I really liked this product," he said. "It's the best I've ever tried."
- ___ A company is an "it," not a "they."
The company wanted younger people to try ~~their~~ its new product.
The company admitted that ~~they were~~ it was having trouble attracting customers.
- ___ People, and nouns that refer to people, take "who," not "that."
That company has clients ~~that~~ who have never tried this new product.
Jennie is a woman ~~that~~ who likes to try new things.
- ___ A "target audience" is singular, so it can't take "they." Change it to "target audience members."
The target audience wants ~~their~~ its potato chips to be fresh and crispy.
The target audience members want their potato chips to be fresh and crispy.
- ___ Things that can be counted come in "numbers of," not "amounts of."
Research shows an increase in the ~~amount of~~ number of gift cards purchased.
The ~~amount of~~ number of people in attendance was staggering.
- ___ When you state prices that are even dollar amounts, don't use a decimal point.
These Reeboks retail for ~~\$35.00~~ \$35 less than the comparable Nikes.
- ___ Spell out the word "percent"; don't use the percent sign (%). Use numerals.
After the ad campaign, sales increased by 8 percent.
The new ad increased product usage by 38 percent.
- ___ "Data" is plural; "datum" is singular.
The data ~~shows~~ show that more women than men use the product.
- ___ "Since" and "Because" do not mean the same thing.
Since the company changed the color of the product, sales have soared. (Time order: the color was changed, and since that time the sales have soared.)
Because the company changed the color of the product, sales began to soar. (Cause and effect: the soaring sales happened because the color was changed.)

___ “Because of” and “due to” do not mean the same thing. According to Bremner, “Verbs, other than copulatives, take adverbs. Nouns and pronouns take adjectives. *Due to* is an adjectival prepositional phrase, as in “His defeat was due to carelessness.” Here the adjective *due* belongs to the noun *defeat*. If you say, “He was defeated due to carelessness,” *due* has nothing to belong to; *he* wasn’t due, nor was *carelessness* due. *Because of* is an adverbial prepositional phrase, as in “He was defeated because of carelessness.” Here *because of* belongs to the verb *defeated*.

He doesn’t like artificial cherry flavor because it reminds him of medicine. (He doesn’t like cherry flavor. Why? Because . . .)

His dislike of artificial cherry flavor is due to all the medicine he took as a child. (He has a dislike of cherry flavor. What caused that? All the medicine he took as a child.)

___ Ranges of numbers: “between” always takes “and,” “from” always takes “to.”

The company’s strongest sales occur between July and September.

The promotion lasted from March to June.

The cost is between \$3 and \$5 per unit. The price range is from \$2 to \$8.

___ Most compound adjectives will be hyphenated, unless the word ends in “-ly.”

The chocolate-flavored drink sold the best.

The long-running magazine finally went out of business.

The heavily perfumed dryer sheet sold poorly.

___ Try to eliminate the verb “to get.” The dictionary has many better words.

The customer will ~~get~~ receive two free tickets with each purchase.

This offer means students will be ~~getting~~ purchasing more downloads.

___ “There is” and “there are” constructions are weak. Change them.

~~There are six breakfast bars in each box.~~ Each box holds six breakfast bars.

~~There is a prize in each cereal box.~~ Each cereal box contains a prize.

___ Don’t use passive voice. It’s boring. Make it active.

~~The chocolate was chosen more often than the vanilla by consumers.~~

Consumers chose the chocolate more often than the vanilla.

___ Don’t use double negatives. They can get confusing very quickly.

The product was ~~not inexpensive~~ expensive.

___ Anything that goes in quotations marks needs double quotes, unless you are using quotation marks within quotations marks. Then the inside ones go to single.

“I don’t think it’s a ‘girlie’ body wash,” he said.

___ Know the difference between *that* and *which*. They are NOT the same.

___ Don’t use *etc.* Just say what you mean, or say “includes such items as.”

___ It’s **Web** site and **Internet**.

___ If you aren’t sure you are using the correct word, please don’t use it. Just look it up or use a thesaurus to find the right one.