

Greetings!

Mayday, Mayday!

Having a word-choice emergency? Can't figure out if it should be *compliment* or *complement*? We had a great response to last year's look at commonly misused words, and so we're at it again in this issue of *KB CommEntary*.

What's Up at KB COMM?

At KB COMM, we provide mission-critical communication and learning services to clients in a variety of industries. Thanks to our established and new clients for keeping us busy. Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Formatting and revising periodically reviewed manufacturing standard operating procedures and work instructions for a pharmaceutical company
- Writing upstream-manufacturing summary reports for a pharmaceutical company
- Creating and revising job descriptions for the Careers website of a high-tech manufacturer
- Developing technical documentation for a provider of web-based transaction-processing products and services
- Writing and editing numerous information products for a healthcare diagnostics manufacturer, including communications to employees from the CEO and executive leadership team, customer letters, trade show presentations and materials, and product marketing brochures
- Reviewing and editing for consistency and accuracy response documents and associated modules for electronic submission to FDA and other health authorities on behalf of a medical device manufacturing company

KB COMM LLC is a certified Women's Business Enterprise. We are officially qualified to participate in corporations' woman- and minority-owned vendor programs.

Please keep us in mind for your communication or training projects.

Tips and Tales

A Word in the Hand Is Worth Three in the Bush

Last year, we tried our best to straighten out word confusion in two categories: non-words (like “irregardlessly” and “should of”) and similar-sounding words that are often mistaken for one another (“continually” vs. “continuously,” for example). This time around we'll focus more on the second type, and throw in some more common errors that we see a lot in the editing process.

Note: We will refer often to the former and the latter. The *former* is the one that comes first and the *latter* is the one that comes last. But you already knew that, right?

Assume versus *presume*: The former means “suppose it to be true,” while the latter means “take for granted since nothing says otherwise.” For example, you would *assume* that it might rain in the future but *presume* that it is currently raining if the dog comes in soaking wet.

Breath versus *breathe*: The former is a noun (“take a deep breath”); the latter is a verb (“breathe normally”). Not to be confused with *breadth*, which means “width.”

Complementary versus *complimentary*: The former refers to things that go well together; the latter means either “gives a lot of compliments” or “included for free.”

Compose versus *comprise*: They both have a similar meaning: “make up” and “contain,” respectively. But there's a key difference—*comprise* is never followed by *of*. So a nation can be *composed of* several states or it can *comprise* several states (either is correct), but it cannot be *comprised of* several states.

Note: If you have trouble remembering how to use *comprise*, substitute it for one of its synonyms—say, *include*—and put the *of* after that word. “The house includes of two bathrooms” doesn't make sense, but “the house includes two bathrooms” does.

Disassemble versus *dissemble*: The former means “to take apart,” and the latter means “to tell lies.” The former is used more frequently and is probably the one you want.

Flout versus *flaunt*: The former means “to openly disregard,” as in a rule; the second means “to show off.”

Imply versus *infer*: The former means “to suggest”; the latter means “to assume based on suggestions.” So you could *infer* that something is true based on what a friend *implies* in conversation.

Peremptory versus *preemptory*: The former means “absolute” or “impossible to refute”; the latter means “appropriated beforehand” or “replaced.” *Preemptive* means the same thing as *preemptory* and is usually preferred.

A *trimester* refers to a period of three months and is not a synonym for “one-third” (even though it is commonly used with regard to a nine-month pregnancy or a nine-month school year, where three months just happens to be one-third).

A *viewpoint* is a physical or figurative area from which something can be seen in a certain way. It is not, however, a catch-all phrase that means “view” or “opinion.” A viewpoint might influence the view that someone has, but the two words are not synonyms.

And there you have it. If you're suffering from overload or have any questions about your own word nemeses, be sure to get in touch with us.

And please remember, *when it has to be right*, KB COMM is here to help.

Sincerely,

Kathy

Kathy Breuninger

KB COMM

kbcommllc.com

