

On the Case of Uppercase

Happy autumn! We edit many different kinds of documents for clients in a variety of industries, and one thing they have in common is capitalization run amok. This issue of *KB CommEntary* discusses when (and when not) to capitalize.

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:

- Writing technical documentation for an engineering services company
- Writing and editing numerous information products for a healthcare diagnostics manufacturer, including communications to employees from the CEO and executive leadership team, customer presentations and letters, product marketing brochures and data sheets, and training materials
- Formatting and revising manufacturing standard operating procedures, work instructions, forms, logbooks, and batch records for a pharmaceutical company
- Creating content-rich model documents for CMC modules for a pharmaceutical company
- Drafting CMC modules for electronic submission to health authorities on behalf of a pharmaceutical company
- Reviewing and editing for consistency and accuracy response documents and associated modules for electronic submission to health authorities on behalf of pharmaceutical companies

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

Capital Offenses

What's the deal with capitalization? We all know that the first word in a sentence is capitalized, as are proper names and formal, official names and titles. But what about those Sentences in which every Word that seems Important is Capitalized? Is that Correct?

Well, no, it isn't. At least, not in English, in which less is more where capitalization is concerned. To review, you should capitalize:

- The first word in a sentence or a sentence fragment (see the preceding paragraph for an example)
- Proper names (*Mary Smith*)
- Official names for organizations, groups, and things (*the Mary Smith Company, Acme Roadrunner Trap™*)
- Official titles and honorifics (*President Mary Smith, Ms. Mary Smith*)
- The first word in a headline or heading
- Other words (except for prepositions) in headlines or headings, if title case is called for by the applicable style guide or convention (*Good Year for Hog Farming*)
- Certain abbreviations (*Hg, degrees C*)

And that's about it. In particular, please do not capitalize terms or names used generically. For example:

Incorrect: At our company, Project Management is very important.

Correct: At our company, project management is very important.

But: At our company, the Project Management Department is very important.

Incorrect: John is President of the Liars' Club and its foremost practitioner.

Correct: John is president of the Liars' Club and its foremost practitioner.

But: President John Jones is the Liars' Club's foremost practitioner.

Incorrect: Press the Ejector Button to dispose of unpleasant guests.

Correct: Press the ejector button to dispose of unpleasant guests.

But, if the button is actually labeled "Ejector": Press the Ejector button to dispose of unpleasant guests.

See how that works? When in doubt, don't. Capitalize, that is.

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

Sincerely,

Kathy

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KB COMM

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