

KB CommEntary

KB COMM • SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Volume 9 Issue 2 • March 2017

Do I Have To?

If you've spent any time around kids, you know how good they are at discerning whether or not there's room for interpretation in the rules. In this issue of *KB CommEntary*, we describe three little words that tell readers how much wiggle room they have when following instructions.

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 and editing numerous information products for a healthcare diagnostics manufacturer, including communications to employee communications, customer presentations and letters, product marketing brochures and data sheets, and training materials
- Writing and editing marketing and employee communications for an academic research organization
- Formatting and revising manufacturing standard operating procedures, work instructions, forms, logbooks, and batch records for a pharmaceutical company
- Managing workload for document formatting, quality check, and upload to a document management system 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

Imperative Import

When you're writing instructions, sometimes it's OK to allow readers a bit of leeway in how to perform a task and sometimes it's not. The verb you use can indicate an entirely optional step, a preferred method, or a mandatory directive.

It all comes down to three words: *can*, *should*, or *must* (or shall).

To indicate an optional step, use *can*:

You can add a pinch of pepper to spice things up.

If an instruction is guidance or a best practice, the verb to use is *should*:

You should make a copy of your passport before you depart.

But if an instruction is to be followed to the letter as written, every time, by everyone, the verb you want is *must* (or *shall*):

You must fasten your seat belt before putting the vehicle in gear.

Eliminate or allow wiggle room in your communications by using *can*, *should*, or *must/shall* to convey your intention.

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

Sincerely,

Kathy

Kathy Breuninger

KB COMM

Kbcommllc.com

