

## Verbing Nouns

What would be the impact if we impacted you with this impact wrench? Find out 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:

- Writing and editing numerous information products for a healthcare diagnostics manufacturer, including 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 technical reports and manufacturing standard operating procedures, work instructions, forms, logbooks, and batch records for a pharmaceutical company
- Revising and maintaining GMP facility drawings
- Drafting, 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

### Verbal Abuse

Do you miss the old days, when *impact* was a noun, or sometimes an adjective, but certainly not a verb? If so, we sympathize. Over the past 40 years or so, fine, upstanding nouns including *impact*, *transition*, *bookmark*, *access*, and *task* have found themselves unceremoniously repurposed as verbs.

These unseemly transformations were often brought to us by the highly educated denizens of corporate boardrooms and legislative backrooms, for whom the rich variety of verbs that already existed in the English language, and with which they presumably were well-acquainted, was apparently insufficient. Harumph!

Alas, there's no turning back. And to be fair, the verbing of nouns has been going on for centuries. It's one of the mechanisms through which English has evolved since the days of Beowulf.

Heck, Shakespeare even did it in this bit of wordplay from *King Richard the Second*:

“Grace me no grace, and uncle me no uncles.”

Indeed, in his book *The Language Instinct*, psychologist Steven Pinker estimates that up to one-fifth of English verbs are derived from nouns, including such ancient standbys as *rain*, *snow*, and *thunder*. So you could even say that verbing nouns is what makes English English!

New forms of words, and new uses for old words, tend not to sit well with us language mavens. But if these adaptations stick around long enough, we do get used to them—if we have to, we guess. We have only one request: The next time you want to *impact* something, could you just *affect* it instead? Please?

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

Sincerely,

*Kathy*

Kathy Breuninger

**KB COMM**

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