

Fall 2014 *Your Words Matter* Writing Prize

Every organization – from government to non-profits to for-profits – needs employees who can communicate their analyses and findings clearly to a variety of audiences. The University of Akron (UA) College of Business Administration (CBA) **Your Words Matter Writing Prize** rewards students for well-written essays that represent excellent critical thinking and personal reflection.

2014 Competition Guidelines

Winners will be published on the CBA Website.

Eligibility

The contest is open to undergraduate and graduate students who are current business majors or who intend to graduate with a business major, or who are currently in a graduate business program.

Prizes

Prizes will be given at each class level, including for graduate students. Winners will be announced December 1.

*Prizes available
for all class levels*

Freshman

1st: \$500
2nd: \$200

Sophomore

1st: \$500
2nd: \$200

Junior

1st: \$500
2nd : \$200

Senior

1st: \$500
2nd: \$200

Graduate

1st: \$500
2nd: \$200

*Email Essays by
Nov. 24, 2014*

Deadlines

All electronically submitted essays must be received no later than 11:59 pm U.S. Eastern Standard Time on Nov. 24, 2014. We will not accept late entries.

Process

Students will submit essays according to the guidelines contained in the Criteria and Prompt sections by the November 24 deadline. Email your essays to businesswriter@uakron.edu and carbon copy duwaldt@uakron.edu.

Criteria

The following categories reflect important items judges will look for while scoring the essay.

*Keys:
Coherence, critical
thinking, excellent
research, correct
citation style*

- **Coherence.** Overall, does the paper make sense? Do you weave together the required assigned aspects of the paper seamlessly?
- **Critical thinking.** Does the essay demonstrate understanding of the topic/theme?
- **Sources.** Are the sources credible (hint: Wikipedia is useful, but not credible), and do you use them to support your points?

Prompt

Pick one quote below and write a 750-1,000 word (3-4 pages, double-spaced) essay including the following requirements:

Entry requirements

- **Cover letter.** The first page of the document should be a cover letter that names and introduces your essay and provides your class level (freshman, etc.). You must verify this information. You also need to acknowledge your intent to graduate with a degree in business. Address the cover letter to the Dean of the College of Business Administration Akron, Dr. Ravi Krovi.

In the essay, make certain you include the following:

- **Person quoted.** Include an accurate description of the author of the quote you choose, who they are or were, and why you believe they would make such a statement based on their background. You must cite the sources of any research you present in your essay per APA style. Any essay that doesn't properly cite sources will not be considered.
- **Reflection.** Describe what the quote means for business, based on the experiences you have had from working, and/or your thoughts from reading about and discussing business.
- **Research.** Perform research to extend the possibilities you present in your reflection. Cite **all** information properly in-text and in a references page, per APA guidelines. The reflection supported by research should be the majority of your essay.
- **No APA Abstract.** You do **not** need to provide an abstract.

Choose one of the quotes below for your essay:

Pick one (1) quote as the subject of your essay.

- **If you see a bandwagon, it's too late.** -- James Goldsmith
- **The NBA is never just a business. It's always business. It's always personal. All good businesses are personal. The best businesses are very personal.** -- Mark Cuban
- **In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.** -- Sun Tzu
- **Out there in some garage is an entrepreneur who's forging a bullet with your company's name on it.** -- Gary Hamel
- **Steve Jobs gave a small private presentation about the iTunes Music Stores to some independent record label people. My favorite line of the day was when people kept raising their hands saying, "Does it do [x]?", "Do you plan to add [y]?" Finally, Jobs said, "Wait, wait – put your hands down. Listen: I know you have a thousand ideas for all the cool features iTunes could have. So do we. But we don't want a thousand features. That would be ugly. Innovation is not about saying yes to everything. It's about saying NO to all but the most crucial features."** -- Derek Sivers

See the writing rubric on the next page for further writing guidelines. Contact Betsy DuWaldt, businesswriter@uakron.edu with questions.



The University of Akron

College of Business Administration

Business Writing Rubric – University of Akron College of Business 9/23/2013

	Very Effective (4)	Good (3)	Adequate (2)	Inadequate (1)
<p>1. Content, Development, and Audience Document establishes and maintains a main idea or thesis that demonstrates an understanding of purpose, subject matter, and audience.</p> <p>Uses appropriate business terms and concepts that demonstrates knowledge of subject matter.</p> <p>Completes all parts of the task.</p>	<p>Insightful main idea or thesis; shows a thorough understanding of the purpose and clearly adapts content to the audience.</p> <p>Develops ideas fully and memorably, using appropriate business concepts and terms.</p> <p>Completes all parts of the task.</p>	<p>Clear main idea or thesis, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose; adapts the content to the audience.</p> <p>Develops ideas clearly, using business concepts and terms.</p> <p>Completes all parts of the task.</p>	<p>Offers a main idea or thesis and demonstrates a basic understanding of the purpose; usually adapts the message to the audience.</p> <p>Develops ideas somewhat, using some business concepts and terms.</p> <p>Completes many parts of the task.</p>	<p>Fails to establish a main idea or thesis and demonstrates little understanding of purpose.</p> <p>Fails to develop ideas, using few or no business concepts or terms.</p> <p>Does not adapt material to audience</p> <p>Completes few parts of the task.</p>
<p>2. Organization Document demonstrates a unified structure by grouping (through paragraphs) and logically ordering information.</p> <p>Uses connections and transitional devices between sentences and paragraphs.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a clearly unified structure; effectively grouping and logically ordering information.</p> <p>Insightful connections and transitions throughout.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a mostly unified structure and consistently groups and logically orders information.</p> <p>Offers many logical connections and transitional devices.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a generally unified structure although has inconsistent paragraphing and sometimes illogical ordering.</p> <p>Inconsistently offers logical connections, and/or transitional devices.</p>	<p>Little evidence of structure or logical ordering of document information.</p> <p>Lacks logical connections or transitional devices.</p>
<p>3. Tone, Word Choice, and Mechanics Uses effective sentence structure, sentence variety, and word choice that demonstrate awareness of audience and purpose.</p> <p>Demonstrates a professional tone.</p> <p>Follows mechanical conventions: correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p>	<p>Shows precise, professional word choice and well-structured and varied sentences that demonstrate a clear understanding of the audience.</p> <p>Demonstrates a professional tone.</p> <p>Very few or no errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p>	<p>Uses professional language and word choice; well-structured and varied sentences, with good understanding of the audience.</p> <p>Demonstrates a generally professional tone.</p> <p>Few errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.</p>	<p>Generally correct sentence structure with some variety but less appropriate word choice. Some understanding of audience and purpose.</p> <p>Not a generally professional tone</p> <p>Some errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling.</p>	<p>Unclear and incoherent language or word choice that shows little awareness of audience; includes errors in sentence structure</p> <p>Lacks a professional tone</p> <p>Grammatical, spelling, and other errors so severe, they significantly interfere with the overall content.</p>
<p>4. Sources/Documentation * Uses sources that support, extend, and inform – but do not substitute for writer’s own idea development.</p> <p>Uses appropriate, credible source materials that comply with assignment requirements.</p> <p>Uses correct citation style.</p>	<p>Uses sources to support, extend and inform, but not as a substitute for writer’s own idea development.</p> <p>Combines a variety of source materials appropriate for the assignment.</p> <p>Uses correct citation style in every aspect of the document.</p>	<p>Uses sources appropriately, but not as a substitute for writer’s own idea development.</p> <p>Combines a variety of materials that are generally appropriate.</p> <p>Thoroughly uses correct citation style.</p>	<p>Uses sources to inform, but also sometimes substitute for writer’s own idea development.</p> <p>Uses one type of source materials.</p> <p>Does not always conform to required citation style.</p>	<p>Neglects important sources.</p> <p>Overuse of quotations or paraphrasing that substitute for writer’s own ideas.</p> <p>Does not use citation style and does not give source acknowledgement, which will result in a charge of plagiarism.</p>

*Please note that some assignments may not require outside sources to be listed

Adapted from Association of American Colleges and Universities **Written Communication Value Rubric**, retrieved from http://www.cte.ku.edu/resources/department_analysis/graduate/resources/aacu_rubrics.pdf