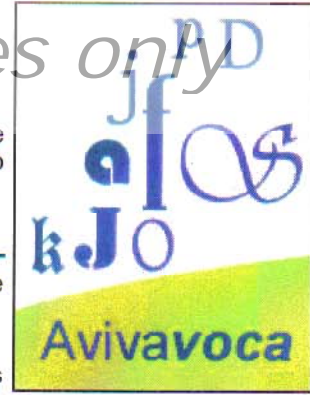


Living Aviva Voca: Keeping it short

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Sample - for display purposes only

Here's another tip on how to embody the Aviva values — the Aviva "voice" — in the way we communicate with our external customers, and with each other. This time, we explore how to omit unneeded words from our writing.



Have you ever had to read the same paragraph three times to glean even a hint of what the writer was trying to say?

That's what it can be like reading text that uses too many words. Overloaded communications have the effect of "weighing down" your message. It's similar to what happens when you carry too much luggage: when your message is overloaded, it doesn't reach its destination — in this case, your reader — as quickly.

It's easy when we're rushed to hammer out a message, and think that as long as we get all the information in there and use standard "business" phrases, people will be able to act on it. But often these rush messages could be trimmed, making for a shorter, clearer message.

Here are some examples of words, phrases or expressions that can weigh down your messages, next to suggested alternatives:

Before...	After...
in order to, the purpose being	to
in the event that	if
currently, presently	now (or leave out altogether)
please be advised that	(leave out altogether)
with regard to / with respect to	about

Along with using fewer words, do you also notice that the options on the right sound less stiff and formal, and more direct and friendly?

Say it simply

The more quickly you can get to the point, the quicker the other person can grasp what you're saying, and act on it.

So remember: it only takes an extra few minutes to go through most messages and clear out the verbal clutter.



Do you have a communication challenge in your job? Want to share ideas for other ways to live Aviva Voca? Let us know! Send me an e-mail, or call me at 416-701-4411. You might see your idea featured in a future edition of *Grapevine*.

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