



Business Correspondence and Reporting

Précis Writing



CHAPTER-7

PRECIS WRITING

INTRODUCTION

A shortening of a text, in one's own words, is known as précis writing. The term is derived from the French word *précis* meaning 'precise'. Thus, a précis gives an accurate and concise description of the substance (or the main idea) contained in the text without losing its meaning. In fact, it is an exact reproduction of the logic, organization, and emphasis of the original text. Précis writing is a very useful exercise as it gives us training in careful reading and develops our capacity to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential. Since it insists on an economy of words, you learn to choose your words carefully and construct your sentences in a concise manner.

Q-1 Explain the meaning and characteristics of précis writing.

Précis writing means shortening of a text, in one's own words.

- The term is derived from the French word *précis* meaning 'precise'.
- A précis gives an accurate and concise description of the substance (or the main idea) contained in the text without losing its meaning.
- It is an exact reproduction of the logic, organization and emphasis of the original text.
- Précis writing is a very useful exercise as it gives us training in careful reading and develops our capacity to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential.
- Since it insists on an economy of words, we learn to choose our words carefully and construct our sentences in a concise manner.

Q-2 Explain the difference between Précis and Summary.

- The first and the most important difference is that a *précis is a brief statement of a piece of writing* such as a report, article or a chapter from a book; whereas a *summary is a short account of longer pieces of work* such as a thesis or a novel.
- Secondly, the précis follows the order and proportion of the material in the original, whereas the writer of the summary is free to change the order and proportion if he wishes to do so.
- Another important difference between the two is that the précis states only the thought of the original text whereas the writer of the summary is free to interpret the material and to comment on it.

Q-3 Explain the qualities of a good Précis.

1. **Clarity** : It is essential that the ideas presented in the précis should be clear and comprehensible. By using simple language and structures, the writer can ensure that there is no ambiguity.
2. **Objectivity** : The writer must have an objective approach. He should be able to write a précis that is unbiased and purely a summary of the original text.
3. **Correctness** : The writer must ensure that not just the facts, but also the grammar and sentences are without flaws. Such errors can obscure the meaning of the message.
4. **Coherence** : A good précis should be coherent i.e. the ideas must be presented in a way that shows the connections clearly.
5. **Completeness** : The writer should include all the important facts from the text in the précis. No important fact can be omitted to make the summary short.
6. **Conciseness** : Conciseness is a desirable quality of a good précis. A piece of writing is considered concise if it conveys the message in the fewest possible words. But the writer should not omit essential facts to achieve conciseness.

Q-4 Explain the procedure of précis writing.

Step 1 : Read the passage carefully- more than once if so required. The first requirement of the writer is to understand the text well enough to extract its central/main idea.

Step 2 : Decide what facts or ideas in the text are essential and what are of secondary or of no importance. It is a good idea to underline the important terms and ideas.

Step 3 : Select a suitable title for the proposed précis.

Step 4 : Collect all the key points and prepare a first draft of the précis, keeping in mind the need to reduce the original text to one-third its length.

The main thoughts expressed in the passage, the ideas it contains, the opinions presented and the conclusion arrived at should be a part of the rough draft.

Step 5 : Read the draft. It may so happen that it is too long. Shorten it further, if necessary, by omitting anything which is not necessary to the central idea or by remodeling the sentences. Normally, you should succeed in producing a good précis by the second draft.

Step 6 : When you have made your second (or final) draft, carefully revise your précis to ensure that you have the bare minimum of words necessary to express the idea of the passage. Check to make sure that the précis has been written in words that are your own and not those of the author.

Q-5 What Points should be remembered while writing a précis?

- A precis must not exceed one-third of the length of the original passage.
- Identify the central idea and omit unnecessary details.
- Eliminate wordy expressions from the précis.
- Avoid unnecessary repetition.
- Every précis should have a short and appropriate title.
- It should be written in the words of the précis-writer.
- The main ideas of the original text should be presented in the same order in the précis.
- Do not introduce ideas of your own in the précis.
- Do not criticize or change the author's ideas.
- Always use the third person, reported speech and past tense while writing a précis. Only universal truths should be written in the present tense.

Illustration: 1

A life of action and danger moderates the dread of death. It not only gives us fortitude to bear pain, but also teaches us at every step the precarious tenure on which we hold our present being. Sedentary and studious men are the most apprehensive on this score. Dr. Johnson was an instance in point. A few years seemed to him soon over, compared with those sweeping contemplations on time and infinity with which he had been used to pose himself. In the still life of a man of letters there was no obvious reason for a change. He might sit in an armchair and pour out cups of tea to all eternity would it had been possible for him to do so. The most rational cure after all for the inordinate fear of death is to set a just value on life. If we mere wish to continue on the scene to indulge our head-strong humor and tormenting passions, we had better be gone at once; and if we only cherish a fondness for existence according to the good we desire from it, the pang we feel at parting which it will not be very server.

Step 1:

Identify the main idea: The text discusses people's fear of death. It details why some people fear death and how this fear can be overcome.

Step 2:

Identify the main points/facts:

- a) We do not fear death if we live an active life.
- b) Those people who fear death the most are the ones who spend much time sitting and studying.
- c) This happens because they lead an inactive and peaceful life and do not want any change.
- d) The most sensible way of ridding oneself of the fear of death is by valuing life.
- e) We should be comfortable with the knowledge that life is unpredictable and that our hold upon life is very uncertain.

Step 3:

Provide a suitable title: The Fear of Death.

Step 4:

Write the first draft:

If we lead an active life facing dangers, we will fear death less. People who spend a lot of their time lazing around and leading a peaceful life are the ones who are most afraid of death. This is because they do not want any change. The most sensible way of getting rid of the fear of death is to value life properly. If we do not give unnecessary importance to our life, we will not feel the pang of death.

Step 5:**Edit your work.**

Remember that the précis cannot be more than a third of the length of the original text. Since the given passage is approximately 200 words, the précis cannot exceed 65 words. However the first draft consists of 80 words. Therefore it needs to be edited. Example:

'People who spend a lot of their time lazing around and leading a peaceful life are the ones who are most afraid of death. This is because they do not want any change.' can be rewritten more succinctly in the following manner:

'People, who lead a lazy and peaceful life, are the most afraid of death.'

Step 6:

Write the final draft.**Précis****The Fear of Death**

If we lead an active life facing dangers, we will fear death less. People, who lead a lazy and peaceful life, fear change and are most afraid of death. The most sensible way of getting rid of the fear of death is to value life properly. If we do not give unnecessary importance to our life, we will not feel the pang of death.

Illustration-2

Sentence Correction is probably the easiest sub-section within the Verbal section of the GMAT for you to improve. Doing well on this section is really a function of knowing your grammar rules very well and then practicing them ad-nauseum with high quality practice problems. Spend some time figuring out what the best materials are, study those materials, and then go back and study the materials a few more times to make sure you have the grammar rules down cold. It is important to do this because you will want to get these questions done quickly so you can save time for the more time-consuming Critical Reasoning and Reading Comprehension sections.

There are a few good books out there to learn the fundamentals of sentence correction, but I used the Manhattan GMAT Sentence Correction Guide. I have also looked through the Aristotle Sentence Correction book and can say that is of very high quality as well. The Manhattan GMAT book was really great and was very clear and concise in describing all the grammar rules I needed to learn. My main complaint about it is that it doesn't have very many practice problems. From what I can tell, this book seems to be the standard book that people suggest when talking about this section of the test and I don't disagree. In case you are wondering, you don't actually have to learn that many grammar rules for the GMAT. The number of rules you have to learn pales in comparison to the topics you must know for the math section of the test. However, the questions on the GMAT are very tricky, so you should go through the Manhattan GMAT book 5-6 times and even make flashcards to make sure you have every rule absolutely down cold. If you do, then you should be able to focus on the meaning of each sentence, which is usually what is required for the harder questions on the test. For practice problems, I really just used the Official Guide and the Official Guide Verbal Supplement. Those were really great resources for practice problems.

I would also recommend memorizing idioms for the test. As of the last few months, idioms are less of a focus on the test, but knowing idioms down cold is an easy way to get an extra question or two correct. You also don't really need to spend that much time memorizing them, so why wouldn't you want to do it?

As I mentioned before, there are instances on more difficult problems where you need to assess the meaning of the sentence and what it is trying to convey. Keep this in mind and try not to obsess over very detailed grammar rules. When in doubt, go with the answer choice that seems to have the most logical meaning over the one that appears to follow some minute grammar rule the best. If the meaning of the original sentence is changed in one of the answer choices, it is definitely a wrong answer choice. If you follow this advice, I guarantee that you will do well on the sentence correction section of the GMAT.

(Source: Free Articles from ArticlesFactory.com)

Précis**GMAT Sentence Correction- How to Get Better**

The Sentence Correction of the GMAT is very doable. Knowing your grammar rules and practicing them will ensure success. Identify the best study material; study them a few times to ensure you have the

rules on your fingertips.

Some reference books that you could use to learn the fundamentals of sentence correction are Manhattan GMAT Sentence Correction Guide and Aristotle Sentence Correction book. You don't actually have to learn that many grammar rules for the GMAT. However, the questions on the GMAT are very tricky, so you should make sure you have every rule absolutely down cold.

There are instances on more difficult problems where you need to assess the meaning of the sentence and what it is trying to convey. When in doubt, go with the answer choice that seems to have the most logical meaning over the one that appears to follow some minute grammar rule the best. Also, remember that the answer is definitely incorrect if the meaning of the original sentence is changed.

Illustration-3:

India's trade deficit with China increased to \$52.69 billion in 2015-16 from \$48.48 billion in the previous financial year, Parliament was informed on Monday.

"During the April-September period of 2016-17, the deficit is at \$25.22 billion," Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

"Increasing trade deficit with China can be attributed primarily to the fact that Chinese exports to India rely strongly on manufactured items to meet the demand of fast expanding sectors like telecom and power," she said.

India is negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade agreement keeping in view "its offensive export interests" as well as sensitivities with respect to all participating countries including China, she said. She added that efforts are being made to increase overall exports by diversifying the trade basket with emphasis on manufactured goods, services, resolution of market access issues and other non-tariff-barriers.

Précis

India's increasing trade deficit with China (Source: The Hindu)

According to Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, India's trade deficit with China has risen by \$4.21 billion, since the last fiscal year, reaching a figure of \$ 52.69 billion. She attributes this to the imports made by the telecom and power sector. To bridge this gap, efforts are being made to enhance the overall exports by diversifying the market emphasizing on various services and manufactured goods.

Illustration-4:

India's new mining bill has provisions which seek, rightly, to shovel money from mining companies to rural people affected by mining, but the devil could lie in the detail. The proposal has three defects— One, it seeks differential treatment for coal and other minerals—coal miners would share 26% of their profits, while miners of other minerals would give additional royalty payments. Two, it exempts captive miners from this obligation to share mineral wealth. And three, it leaves out the key variable, the price of the ore, manipulating which companies can arbitrarily understate their profits and pay a pittance as royalty, as they indeed have been. The sensible thing is to link royalty to the globally traded price of the mineral in question and assign a share of reasonable royalty to the local community. Unify the sharing parameter as a share of the royalty linked to globally traded prices, for every mineral.

As coal mining is done mostly by state owned giant Coal India, it will have to pay most. Current royalty rates, revised every three years, are pathetically low. Miners routinely understate prices at which they sell minerals to deplete the value of royalties. Some of India's largest miners are actually power, steel and other metals makers that squat on large captive mines. (Archives: newspaper)

Précis

Loopholes in New Mining Bill

India's new mining bill that diverts funds from mining companies to rural people affected by mining has numerous loopholes. It seeks differential treatment for coal and other minerals. It exempts captive miners from this obligation to share mineral wealth. It disregards the price of the ore, manipulating which companies can understate their profits. Instead, royalty can be linked to the globally traded price of the mineral and unifying the sharing parameter thus ensuring fairness.

Illustration-5:

India has witnessed great expansion of educational opportunities since the attainment of independence. However, the disabled children have not yet benefited in any substantial manner from the growth in educational facilities. Education of handicapped children is not considered important as it is believed that such children ultimately become more dependent and non productive. It is therefore believed that scarce national resources should not be wasted on them.

Further, it has been our misconceived notion that the education of handicapped children requires highly specialized people and as such, it must essentially be very costly. Maybe, precisely for these wrong notions, we have not been able to involve clinical and educational specialization programmes of training and education exclusively meant for handicapped children.

It is encouraging to note that the new National Policy on Education has recommended the placement of such children in regular schools so as to provide them with integrated education along with normal students. The integrated education will take care of the different needs of various categories and types of disabled children. The objective is to place the disabled children in ordinary schools for imparting education with the help of special teachers, aids and other resources. For fulfilling this objective an array of the necessary infrastructure by way of training of teachers, provision of equipment and book etc are some of the basic pre-requisites. Hopefully, the parents and their handicapped children will be greatly relieved when the latter are transferred to regular schools.

Précis

Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities

Despite expansion of educational opportunities in India, the disabled children have not yet benefited significantly. Due to the belief that handicapped children are dependent and non productive and their education requires highly specialized teachers, educational programmes for handicapped children have never been implemented. The new National Policy on Education recommends that such children be placed in regular schools where their needs are catered to. However, to fulfill this objective, there are prerequisites such as training of teachers, provision of equipment and book, etc. Hopefully, this recommendation will bring relief to handicapped children.

Illustration-6:

Interviews are the most common method used by employers to find candidates for jobs. Many candidates take the interview process very seriously, while others do not. There are 5 interview mistakes that you must avoid if you are to secure the job that you want.

1. Being late

Apart from a major emergency when everything shuts down, there really is no excuse for being late. Take the time to plan your journey, estimate how long it will take to get to the interview venue and build in time for delays. Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your interview time and allow 30 minutes for delays. It is better to arrive 45 minutes early than 15 minutes late.

2. Not knowing about the organization

A question to find out what you know about the organization is almost guaranteed. Despite this many candidates are unable to demonstrate that they have even done basic research. With the power of the internet and more general freedom of information there really is no excuse.

3. Not knowing why you want the job

This is another interview favorite. The interviewer knows that you need to earn money so make sure this is not your response. Is it something about the businesses reputation, the challenges it faces, the segment of the market it serves, style of management or progression prospects. Whatever it is be clear on why you want the job.

4. Not knowing yourself

A question about your strengths and weaknesses will come up in some form or other. Clearly you don't want to come up with a weakness that will blow away your chances of getting the job, but at the same time you need to demonstrate self awareness. Think of 3 strengths and 3 development areas that you will talk about in the interview.

5. Asking about salary

Good interviewers will give you the opportunity to ask them questions. Poorly prepared candidates will not make the most of this opportunity. They will ask (before they have been offered the job) about salary, benefits and holidays. The well prepared candidate will focus on questions about promotion prospects, training and development, the future direction of the company and what it is like to work in the organization.

Interviews are challenging for both the interviewer and candidates. By avoiding some of the most common mistakes, you can greatly increase your chances of success.

Source: Free Articles from ArticlesFactory.com

Précis**Interview Mistakes that Must be Avoided**

Since interviews are still the most common method of selecting candidates for jobs, there are some mistakes that you must avoid making during an interview:

- 1. Being late:** There is no excuse for being late, so plan in a manner that you arrive a few minutes earlier.
- 2. Not knowing about the organization:** Since it is certain that you will be asked a question regarding what you know about the organization, you must do a basic research before you arrive for the interview.
- 3. Not knowing why you want the job:** Your interviewer would want to know why you want the job. Have something to tell them apart from the fact that you need to earn money'.
- 4. Not knowing yourself:** You need to demonstrate self awareness. Think of strengths and development areas that you will talk about in the interview.
- 5. Asking about salary:** When given a chance to ask questions, enquire about things like training and development, instead of enquiring about salary and perks.

CLASS WORK

Read the following articles and write a précis for each of the following.

- Q-1** India's new mining bill has provisions which seek, rightly, to shovel money from mining companies to rural people affected by mining, but the devil could lie in the detail. The proposal has three defects— One, it seeks differential treatment for coal and other minerals—coal miners would share 26% of their profits, while miners of other minerals would give additional royalty payments. Two, it exempts captive miners from this obligation to share mineral wealth. And three, it leaves out the key variable, the price of the ore, manipulating which companies can arbitrarily understate their profits and pay a pittance as royalty, as they indeed have been. The sensible thing is to link royalty to the globally traded price of the mineral in question and assign a share of reasonable royalty to the local community. Unify the sharing parameter as a share of the royally linked to globally traded prices, for every mineral.

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- Q-2** India has witnessed great expansion of educational opportunities since the attainment of independence. However, the disabled children have not yet benefited in any substantial manner from the growth in educational facilities. Education of handicapped children is not considered important as it is believed that such children ultimately become more dependent and non productive. It is therefore believed that scarce national resources should not be wasted on them.

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Interviews are the most common method used by employers to find candidates for jobs. Many candidates take the interview process very seriously, while others do not.

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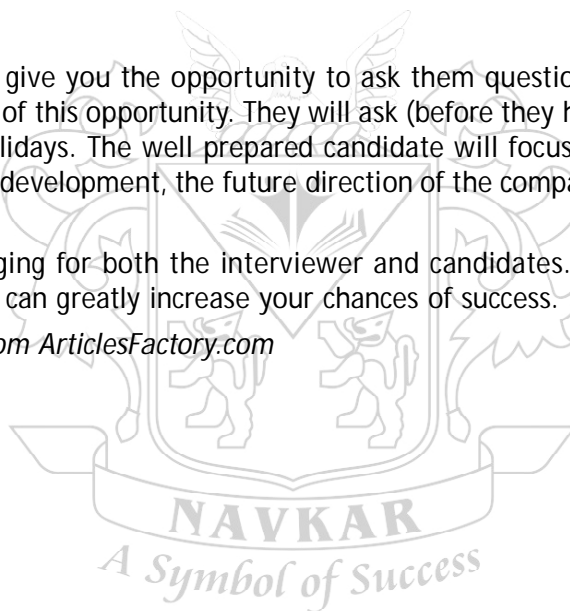
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Interviews are challenging for both the interviewer and candidates. By avoiding some of the most common mistakes, you can greatly increase your chances of success.

Source: *Free Articles from ArticlesFactory.com*



HOME WORK

Read the following passage and write a precis for each of the following.

Q-1 The ranking of India as one of the top 10 wealthiest countries in the world is largely because of its large population. India is the seventh wealthiest country in the world. It figures among the 10 wealthiest countries, with a total individual wealth of \$ 5,600 billion. According to a report by *New World Wealth*, India is ranked seventh, ahead of Canada (\$ 4,700 billion), Australia (\$ 4,500 billion) and Italy (\$ 4,400 billion), which came in at 8th, 9th and 10th slots, respectively.

The U.S is the wealthiest in the world in terms of total individual wealth held (\$ 48,900 billion) while China stood second and Japan third, with total individual wealth of \$ 17,400 billion and USD 15,100 billion, respectively. Others in the top 10 club include the United Kingdom (4) with a total individual wealth of \$ 9,200 billion, followed by Germany (5th, \$ 9,100 billion) and France (6th, \$ 6,600 billion). Wealth refers to net assets of a person. It includes all their assets (property, cash, equities, business interests) less any liabilities, the report said adding that it excludes government funds from its figures. The ranking of India as one of the top 10 wealthiest countries in the world is largely because of its large population. "Australia's ranking is impressive, considering it only has 22 million people living there," the report explained. Over the past 5 years, China was the fastest growing wealthiest country in terms of dollar wealth-growth. On India, the report stated, "Australia and India also grew strongly and India, Australia and Canada have just overtaken Italy over the past 12 months." The study ranked the wealthiest countries in the world as of June 2016 in terms of total individual wealth held.

Q-2. As an investor, you may pay close attention to the stock markets and find it difficult to understand why markets are so volatile. You may ask many questions like "Will markets achieve a new high tomorrow or has the time arrived for deep correction?" "Is this a good time to invest?" We don't know what the future holds. As a long term investor, it is important not to spend time dwelling on such questions rather, remain invested in the long-run.

Markets act differently in short term and long term situations. You need to compare return on investments over a 10 year performance and not for a month or for a year before you decide to invest in equities.

In the short term, markets are volatile; however, investors who hold long term financial goals should not worry about volatility and should remain invested.

Benefits of investing with a long term horizon:

- Long term investments carry specific financial goals and give options to investors to invest small amounts at regular intervals like per month which has a potential to deliver healthy returns in the long term. SIP is one of the best investment vehicles. [Click here](#) to know more about SIP in mutual fund.
- Rate of returns are likely to fluctuate and remain volatile on short term investments however long term investments are comparatively less volatile and hold potential to give stable returns.
- Tax benefits are available for all long term investments including investments in mutual funds.

Investments in Mutual Funds - Investments in mutual funds are advisable for all types of investors whether you have a short term financial goal or a long term investment objective. Broadly equity, debt and gold funds are available for investments and you can invest in those funds as per your financial goal.

Benefits of investing in mutual funds

Professional investment management - The Mutual Fund industry is managed by professionals and qualified investment fund management teams with inputs from solid research backed by experience.

Diversification - Another benefit is diversification. You can invest in equity funds, debt funds, gold funds as per your preference, income, age, risk taking ability etc.

Transparent and regulated industry - Above all, the mutual fund industry is regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) which ensures a smooth and transparent functioning of the mutual fund industry.

Mutual funds are a one-stop shop for all your investment needs. Needs can range from wanting to purchase a car in the next one or two years to saving for your child's future and education in the next 10 years, saving up for your retirement, or saving tax on your regular income. Investors ideally look for diversification, low costs, ease and flexibility of withdrawal, better tax efficiency etc. Investors can achieve all their short term and long term financial goals through investments in Mutual Funds.

Q-3. What is Women Empowerment

Women empowerment in simple words can be understood as giving power to women to decide for their own lives or inculcating such abilities in them so that they could be able to find their rightful place in the society.

According to the **United Nations**, women's empowerment mainly has five components:

- Generating women's sense of self-worth;
- Women's right to have and to determine their choices;
- Women's right to have access to equal opportunities and all kinds of resources;
- Women's right to have the power to regulate and control their own lives, within and outside the home; and
- Women's ability to contribute in creating a more just social and economic order.

Thus, women empowerment is nothing but recognition of women's basic human rights and creating an environment where they are treated as equals to men.

Women Empowerment in India

Historical Background:

From ancient to modern period, women's condition-socially, politically and economically- has not remained same and it kept changing with times. In ancient India, women were having equal status with men; in early Vedic period they were very educated and there are references of women sages such as Maitrayi in our ancient texts. But with the coming of famous treatise of Manu i.e. Manusmriti, the status of women was relegated to a subordinate position to men.

All kinds of discriminatory practices started to take form such as child marriage, devadashi pratha, nagar vadhu system, sati pratha etc. Women's socio-political rights were curtailed and they were made fully dependent upon the male members of family. Their right to education, right to work and right to decide for themselves were taken away.

During medieval period the condition of women got worsened with the advent of Muslim rulers in India; as also during the British period. But the British rule also brought western ideas into the country.

A few enlightened Indians such as Raja Ram Mohun Roy influenced by the modern concept of freedom, liberty, equality and justice started to question the prevailing discriminatory practices against women. Through his unrelenting efforts, the British were forced to abolish the ill-practice of Sati. Similarly several other social reformers such as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Acharya Vinoba Bhave etc. worked for the upliftment of women in India. For instance, the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 was the result of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's movement for improving the conditions of widows.





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