



Does grammar matter?

In most assignment guidelines given in the Business School, assessment criteria tend to focus on aspects such as answering the question, using course theories and content, and writing analytically. Writing grammatically may be a minor criterion in terms of marks, but it is significant in terms of how clearly and accurately ideas and information are expressed. If there are serious grammatical problems, this will interfere with the meaning being expressed. So, yes, grammar does matter!

Beyond the requirements of the assignments in your courses, clear expression is a requirement for communicating effectively both orally and in writing. High level oral and written communication skills are essential requirements for most commerce related, middle and senior management positions. Grammar matters at work too!

Informal grammar is a problem for non-English speakers

The language used by native speakers when speaking English may not always have the same features as the standard grammar expected in written assignments. Native speakers of English, as well as non-native speakers, may find their assignments returned to them with words crossed out or underlined. An awareness of grammar is important for all students.

What are the most common grammar mistakes?

Learning advisers in the Education Development Unit have observed that there are certain grammar mistakes that frequently occur in student writing. The most frequently noted mistakes involve problems with:

- f parts of speech
- f subject/verb agreement
- f number agreement
- f articles
- f tenses
- f parallelism
- f pronoun reference
- f independent and dependent clauses
- f sentence length



Part of speech

Some non-native speakers of English have difficulty selecting the appropriate part of speech. This is particularly a problem for speakers of languages in which the form of a word does not change when the grammatical role of the word changes. The term “part of speech” refers to the categories: verb, noun, adjective, adverb, pronoun, article and preposition.

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