

Eliminating Sentence Structure Errors

Some of the most common complaints about writing in the workplace involves three sentence structure errors.

1. **Fragment.** A fragment is usually a broken-off part of a sentence. Fragments often can be identified by the words that introduce them—words such as *although, as, because, even, except, for example, if, instead of, since, such as, that, which, and when*.

Example: Jeremy loaded his résumé with keywords and relevant skills. Which is why he couldn't understand receiving no responses.

Improved: Jeremy loaded his résumé with keywords and relevant skills, which is why he couldn't understand receiving no responses.

2. **Run-on (fused) sentence.** A sentence with two independent clauses must be joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and, or, nor, but*) or by a semicolon. Without a conjunction or a semicolon, a run-on sentence results:

Example: Becca considered an internship she also thought about graduate school.

Improved: Becca considered an internship, but she also thought about graduate school.

Improved: Becca considered an internship; she also thought about graduate school.

3. **Comma splice.** When a writer joins (splices together) two independent clauses without using a coordinating conjunction, a comma splice results.

Example: Jeremy disliked networking, however he knew how important it was.

Improved: Jeremy disliked networking; however, he knew how important it was.

Improved: Jeremy disliked networking, but he knew how important it was.

Study the following. Identify fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. For each item write an improved version. If a sentence is correct, write C.

1. Jeremy mailed over a hundred beautifully written résumés. Which is why he was depressed when he didn't receive quick responses.
2. To come up with a tagline that describes what you do and who you are. Ask yourself questions about what you are really good at.
3. Candidates can't anticipate precise questions, however they can expect to be asked about their education, skills, experience, and availability.
4. An elevator speech is a pitch you can deliver in 60 seconds it tells who you are and what you can offer.
5. Becca hoped to find a job in marketing, however she was willing to consider other offers.
6. If possible, call in advance to inquire about what to wear, also ask how to prepare.
7. Some job candidates go a step further they prepare professional-looking business cards with their name and tagline.
8. In today's challenging and digital job market, the focus is not so much on what you want but on what the employer needs.

9. Although you may be changing jobs and careers in the future. You still need to train for a specific career area now.
10. Zack saw no value in preparing a résumé at this time. Because he was only a sophomore and searching for a job was a distant and distressing task.
11. Employment counselors suggest learning more about careers they recommend taking a summer job, an internship, or a part-time position in your field.
12. Having a current résumé makes you look well-organized and professional. If an unexpected employment opportunity should arise.
13. With over 50,000 job boards and employment websites deluging the Internet. It's hard to know where to start.
14. Early in her academic career, Becca begin monitoring advertisements and websites in her career area, Jeremy preferred to wait.
15. Recruiters seem to favor chronological résumés. Which is good because they are easier to write than functional résumés.