

## Tip #1 WEAK SUBJECTS

**Basic Guidelines:** avoid using *It is ...*, *There is/are/will be* whenever possible

The subject is one of the most important parts of any sentence; the verb is another critical part. In English, the subject is generally the first main part that a reader encounters, and thus greatly impacts the reader's efforts to understand your writing; that is, what you want to reader to understand from your writing.

Every sentence in itself is typically a story of sorts. Notice the four possible ways to communicate what happened here:

<i>The <u>abstract</u> was sent to the journal by e-mail from Shiro.</i>	"abstract" represents the <u>receiver</u> of the action of the verb; that is, the "sending" happened to the "abstract"
<i>The <u>journal</u> received the abstract by e-mail from Shiro.</i>	"journal" represents the <u>destination</u> of the abstract; that is, where the abstract is going
<i><u>E-mail</u> from Shiro delivered the abstract to the journal.</i>	"E-mail" represents the <u>means or method used to</u> deliver the abstract to the journal
<i><u>Shiro</u> sent the abstract to the journal by e-mail.</i>	"Shiro" represents the <u>agent</u> who caused a change to happen ( <u>changemaker</u> ); that is, who caused the action

All four sentences are perfectly good English (grammar), yet they stress different actors in the story. It is your decision which actor to stress as the writer, but a concerted effort must be made to choose the most important actor by the final draft of your writing in order for your writing to be more effective.

You want to try your utmost to use strong subjects. *It is ... It was ... It will be... There is ... There are...* etc. are conversational phrasing that should be avoided in formal writing. *It* or *There* is an "empty subject" and refers to another word or phrase in the sentence.

### 1. ORIGINAL

*It is also necessary to examine how to optimize the weights used in the BP model and the relevant artificial natural network (ANN).*

(weak subject, weak verb)

### 1. REVISED

*Examining how to optimize the weights used in the BP model and the relevant artificial natural network (ANN) is also necessary.*

(strong subject, weak verb)

*Examining how to optimize the weights used in the BP model and the relevant artificial natural network (ANN) has also proven necessary.*

(strong subject, strong verb)

## COMMENTS

The “to + V” (infinitive 不定詞) form is rather weak and has the nuance of doubt or uncertainty. In this sentence, though, the writer specifically states a definite, certain need: **examining**. The sentence

**It is also necessary to examine how to optimize the weights used in the BP model and the relevant artificial neural network (ANN is necessary).**

This sentence is perfectly good English grammar, yet was much more common before the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nowadays, emphasizing more certainty is becoming the norm, at least much more so in scientific and business writing.

Note: The following sentence using a gerund (同名詞) is generally bad grammar:

× **It is also necessary examining how to optimize the weights used in the BP model and the relevant artificial neural network (ANN is necessary).**

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### 2. ORIGINAL

***In the FBP method, there are several metal artifacts like this.***

(weak subject, weak verb)

### 2. REVISED

***In the FBP method, several metal artifacts like this are found.***

***In the FBP method, several metal artifacts like this can be found.***

***Several metal artifacts like this are found in the FBP method.***

### 3. ORIGINAL

***In eye muscle anatomy, there is no strict separation between the muscle and the tendon. (2.4.2)***

(weak subject, weak verb)

### 3. REVISED

***In eye muscle anatomy, strict separation between the muscle and the tendon is non-existent.***

***In eye muscle anatomy, no strict separation between the muscle and the tendon can be found.***

4. ORIGINAL

*It is necessary to consider the challenges of the future based on the population composition.*

(strong subject, strong verb)

4. REVISED

*Considering the challenges of the future based on the population composition is necessary.*

(strong subject, weak verb)

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*We must consider the challenges of the future based on the population composition.*

(weak subject, strong verb)

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*Society must consider the challenges of the future based on the population composition.*

(strong subject, strong verb)

5. ORIGINAL

*I am sure (that) it is beneficial to work at your research center for both the company and me.*

(weak subject, weak verb)

5. REVISED

*I am sure (that) working at your company will be beneficial for both the research center and me.*

(strong subject, weak verb)

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*I am sure (that) working at your company will prove beneficial for both the research center and me.*

(strong subject, strong verb)

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*I am sure (that) working at your company will benefit both the research center and me.*

(stronger sentence structure)

6. ORIGINAL

*It is indispensable to manage natural resources effectively.*

6. REVISED

*Managing natural resources effectively is indispensable.*

7. ORIGINAL

*Thus, it is highly demanding to quantitatively analyze reaction speed and quantum yield under various reacting conditions for more precise and improved applications.*

7. REVISED

*Thus, quantitatively analyzing reaction speed and quantum yield under various reacting conditions for more precise and improved application is highly demanding.*

8. ORIGINAL

*To understand signal processing in the radio circuit, it is very important to understand the modules in the radio circuit.*

8. REVISED

*To understand signal processing in the radio circuit, understanding the modules in the radio circuit is very important.*

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*Understanding the modules in the radio circuit is critical for understanding signal processing in the radio circuit.*

9. ORIGINAL

*According to a survey by the Thai government, it was discovered that 63% of the people are satisfied with their government's recent environmental policies.*

9. REVISED

*A survey by the Thai government proved (stated, revealed) that 63% of the people are satisfied with their government's recent environmental policies.*

10. ORIGINAL

*If the government does not provide sufficient research funds in next year's budget, then there will be trouble.*

10. REVISED

*If the government does not provide sufficient research funds in next year's budget, then troubles will result.*

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*If the government fails to provide sufficient research funds in next year's budget, then troubles will result.*

(see tips on Negatives)