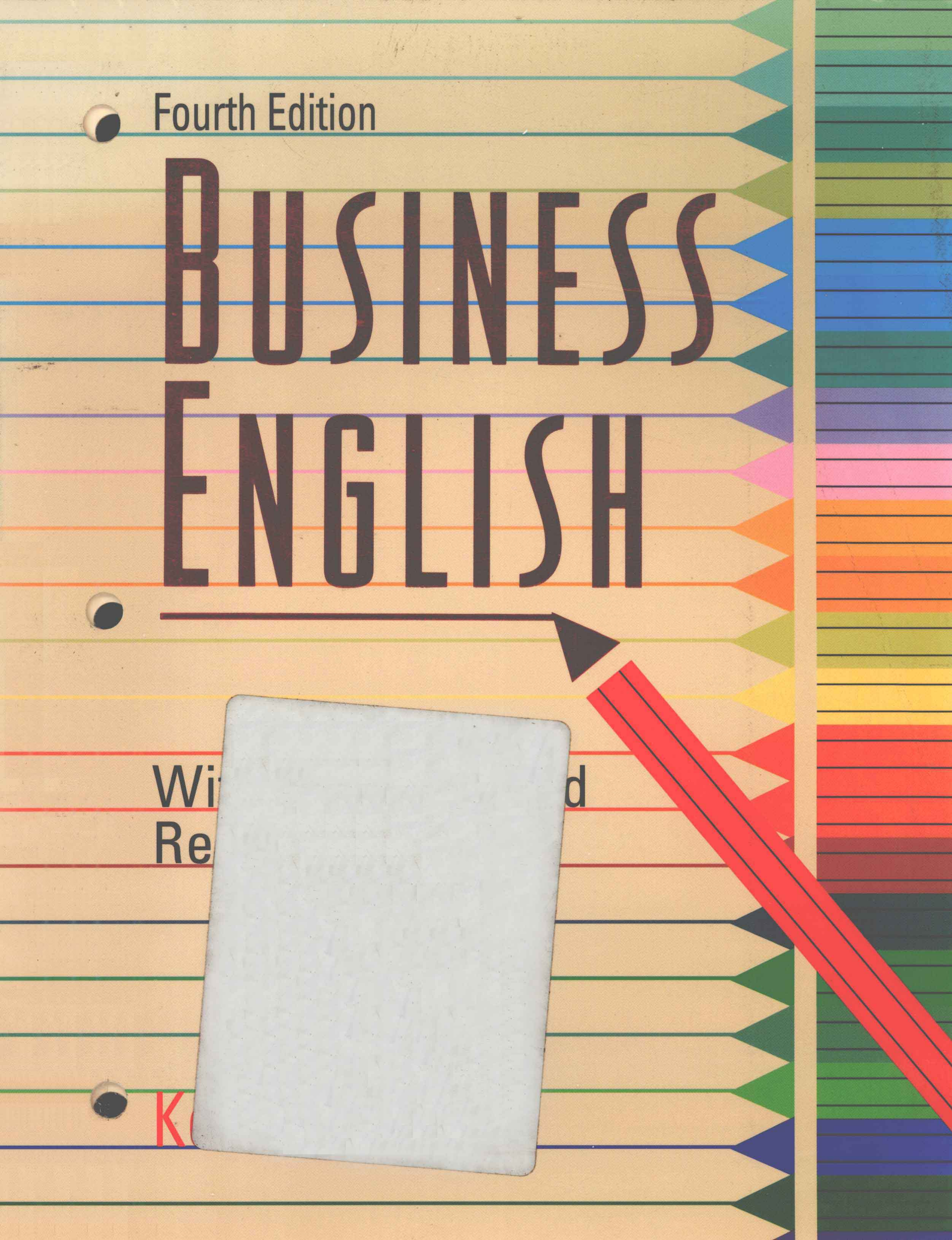
Fourth Edition

BUSINESS ENGLISH



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Fourth Edition

BUSINESS ENGLISH

With Programmed Reinforcement

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for Kathleen, Michael, David, Thomas, Peter,
and Stephen

INTRODUCTION

The ability to write clearly and correctly has always been a valuable skill in the business world. This is especially true in today's organization, in which modern technology has significantly altered both the way and the extent that business people communicate through writing.

A few years ago, if you wanted to send a message, you probably would dictate it or give a rough copy to an assistant to type and mail. If you preferred, the assistant would type the message, return it to you for possible revisions, then retype and send it. Lengthy letters and reports demanded a great deal of time for typing and retyping. In today's office, however, you could dictate the message by phone into a recording device at the word processing center. There, the operator of a word processor would keyboard it and have the word processor print out hard copies to be mailed or returned to you for possible revision. Any changes could then be keyboarded and incorporated into the original text without the need for complete retyping. Copies of the revised message could be printed at speeds many times faster than anyone could type.

If you wanted to send an interoffice memo, whether to someone in your building or to divisions throughout the country, you might decide to keyboard it yourself at your work station on your personal computer. You could make any revisions on the computer's video display and then transfer the message electronically to the computer terminals of the people for whom the memo is intended. You would not need to use even a single sheet of paper.

Modern technology thus places a premium on your ability to communicate correctly and quickly. Both the increased volume made possible by computer technology and the need to make the technology cost effective by using it to its full potential require today's business person to know and to use correct English automatically.

Remember, the computer can greatly increase your potential efficiency as a writer, but it cannot take your place. You still must *create* the message. You must be sure it is clear, complete, and correct if your reader is to understand the message and act on it. Writing errors such as mistakes in grammar and punctuation, misspelled words, and improper usage will distract and confuse the reader as well as decrease his or her confidence in you and your business. Obviously, your message will be less likely to be successful.

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Knowing how to express yourself correctly is not just necessary for writing successful messages. It is important to your personal success and advancement in the business organization. Numerous studies, some of which have gone into the planning of this book, confirm that your ability to communicate, more than your expertise in your particular field, will be the most important factor influencing your success in the business world. No matter how much you know, if you are unable to express it clearly and correctly, your knowledge is lost to others. They will not fully understand you, and they will not fully appreciate you. Indeed, if your writing is marked by common grammatical and spelling errors, others will undervalue your abilities and worth. Hence your opportunity for advancement depends quite heavily on your ability to communicate. The higher you progress in the organization, the more important good communication skills will be.

In short, whether it is your responsibility to write messages yourself or to transcribe those of someone else, your command of English is essential to your success in business. Your study of *Business English* will give you a firm and thorough foundation in the basics of business writing to help you achieve this success.

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1

THE PARTS OF SPEECH

Language is the use of words to express ideas and feelings. Sometimes the words are spoken. Sometimes they are written. In either case, through language people are able to express thoughts and emotions.

We call the rules of language **grammar**. Grammar is simply a description of the natural pattern of language that people have evolved over many centuries. There are many natural patterns of language. Each language has its own particular pattern. In English, for example, the words that describe or modify a noun (called **adjectives**) normally appear before the noun. In French they appear after the noun. In English the noun and verb usually appear next to each other. In German a major part of the verb usually appears at the end of the sentence. English, French, and German have their own rules of grammar. So does every other language. To express your ideas clearly and effectively in any language, you need to know the rules of grammar for that language.

In this text, of course, we are concerned with the rules for the English language. Most of these rules apply to both spoken and written English. Others, such as all the rules regarding capitalization and punctuation, specifically apply to written English. We will be studying the rules for written English. When you know them, you automatically know all the appropriate rules for spoken English as well.

When we describe language, we talk about different classes of words. We categorize these words according to the jobs they perform. These jobs include naming, describing, connecting, and showing action. In English there are eight classes of words. These classes are the basic building blocks of the English language. We call them the eight parts of speech: **nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions,** and **interjections**.

As you can see from our discussion so far, it is almost impossible to discuss our language without using these terms. So, in this chapter we will look briefly at each part of speech to help give us an overview of the material we will study in detail in other chapters.

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NOUNS

A noun is the *name* of something—a person, place, thing, quality, concept, or action.

person—Diana, architect, child
place—New Orleans, outside, office
thing—automobile, building, book
quality—honesty, sincerity, courage
concept—beauty, truth, love
action—listening, dancing, writing

Nouns are one of the two most important classes of words in the language (verbs are the other). Sentences revolve around nouns because nouns can be both the subjects and objects of verbs.

The following employment ad contains many different kinds of nouns. All of them have been italicized. Notice that they are all *names* of something. Some of the words that are not italicized may look like nouns. They have not been italicized because they are not being used as nouns. We will say more later about how the same word can be used as more than one part of speech.

Systems *Development* & Systems *Analysis* *Rosemont Cosmetics*, fast becoming a significant *force* in the cosmetics/fragrance *industries*, seeks the following *individuals* to advance our automation *efforts* further. If you recognize the *advantages* of *working* in a small shop *environment* and are able to develop strong working *relationships* with user *departments* and key management *staff*, telephone or write us immediately! Excellent verbal communication *skills* are imperative for all *positions*.

PRONOUNS

Pronouns are noun substitutes. They provide both efficiency and variety of expression. Look at this sentence without pronouns:

> Victoria said Victoria needed the pocket calculator Victoria's father had given Victoria if Victoria was going to complete Victoria's accounting assignment on time.

Now look at it with pronouns:

> Victoria said *she* needed the pocket calculator *her* father had given *her* if *she* was going to complete *her* accounting assignment on time.

The noun to which a pronoun refers—the noun for which it stands—is its **antecedent**. It is important, of course, that this antecedent be clear to the reader.

Here is a list of some common pronouns:

I
you
he
she
it
we
they
him
her
them
me
my
his
their
its
some
none
anyone
nobody
somebody

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VERBS

As we said, the verb is one of the two most important parts of speech. A verb can be either a word or a group of words. Usually the verb tells us what the subject *does*. This kind of verb is called an **action verb**. Words like *run*, *write*, *argue*, *teach*, *build*, *talk*, *score*, *leave*, *give*, and *take* are action verbs.

Often a verb joins, or links, the subject to words that describe it. This kind of verb is called a **state-of-being** (or **linking**) **verb**. Here are some common linking verbs: *is*, *are*, *am*, *will be*, *has been*, *will have been*, *was*, and *were*.

When linking verbs are used in combination with various forms of action verbs, they function as *helping verbs*. (In the previous sentence, for example, *are* is a helping verb for the action verb *used.*)

We will discuss verbs in detail in Chapters 6 to 9. Right now it is important for you to be able to recognize verbs to see whether a sentence is complete—to know whether a statement is really a sentence. Every sentence must have at least one verb and one noun. That is why verbs and nouns are the two most important parts of speech. Look at the following examples. Some have more than one verb. See how verbs are used to make statements, ask questions, or give commands.

Statements

Bo *knows.*
I *am leaving.*
Kristin *commutes* to school.
The entire staff *should have been notified.*
Ms. Robinson *reprimanded* Tom when he *misplaced* the file.
The computer *is* off line.
It *seems* later than it actually *is.*

Questions

Who *is* it?
What *do* you *think*?
Will this new telephone system *be installed* before Ms. Tadeschi *returns* from Miami?

Commands

Send copies of these specifications to all our suppliers as soon as you *have reviewed* them.
Relax, take a deep breath, and *tell* me about the interview.

PROGRAMMED REINFORCEMENT

Now you are going to reinforce your understanding of what you have just read by working through a carefully chosen sequence of questions and answers.

Programmed Reinforcement is a series of exercises based on an educational idea called *programmed learning*. In programmed learning a complex idea is broken down into many small bits of information that you can easily learn one at a time. In this section you are asked a question about one simple bit of information. You write your answer in the space provided. Then you check your answer against the correct answer printed in the book. If your answer is correct, you go on to the next question. If it is wrong, you go over the question again to see why. Thus, you do not go on until you are certain that you understand each step. In this way you can move with certainty, step by step, to a full understanding of the topic.

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WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Generally you are asked to do one of two things in each frame:

1. Where you find blanks, write the missing word or words.
   For example—In studying English grammar we refer to basic classes of words in the language. These words are known as the parts of speech.
2. Where you find two or more choices in parentheses, circle the correct word.
   For example—In English there are (six, [✓ eight,] ten) parts of speech.

Questions or statements are numbered in sequence S1, S2, and so on. The correct response, or answer, to S1 is numbered R1; the correct response to S2 is R2, and so on.

Begin with S1, which appears in the top right-hand frame. Cover the corresponding answer (R1), which appears in the left-hand area of the second frame. Simply follow the frames down the page and onto the next page until you have completed the Programmed Reinforcement section. Then turn to the exercises that are assigned at the end of each Programmed Reinforcement section. These exercises will give you extensive practice in applying the principles you have just learned.

You will not be graded on your work in Programmed Reinforcement. There is nothing to be gained from looking at the correct response before you write your answer. If you do look first, you will only cheat yourself of valuable practice.

Work through this programmed material carefully. You will then be able to move on to the practice exercises with ease and confidence.

		S1	When we study the rules of language, we study ______________ ______________ .
R1	grammar	**S2**	In studying English grammar we refer to basic classes of words in the language. These words are known as the ______________ .
R2	parts of speech	**S3**	There are (six, eight, ten) parts of speech.
R3	eight	**S4**	Words that name persons, places, things, qualities, concepts, and actions are known as ______________ .
R4	nouns	**S5**	Circle the nouns in the following list: **computer, intelligence, think, thought, truly, truth, Roberta.**
R5	**computer, intelligence, thought, truth, Roberta**	**S6**	Underline the nouns in the following sentence: **Professor Stanley from the local college is offering classes in business writing on Thursdays this semester.**
R6	**Professor Stanley, college, classes, writing, Thursdays, semester**	**S7**	A word that can take the place of a noun is a(n) ______________ ______________ .
R7	pronoun	**S8**	Circle the pronouns in the following list: **we, you, very, some, they, five, Krystle.**
R8	**we, you, some, they**		

	S9 The noun to which a pronoun refers is known as its ______________ ______________ .
R9 antecedent	**S10** Circle the pronouns in the following sentences. Draw a line to their antecedents. a. **Josh told me that his brother was touring the plant.** b. **Madeleine asked her supervisor for his advice.** c. **I heard Carole say that her new home computer has its own modem.**
R10 a. **Josh told me that his brother was touring the plant.** b. **Madeleine asked her supervisor for his advice.** c. **I heard Carole say that her new home computer has its own modem.**	**S11** A verb is a word that shows (a) action, (b) state of being, or (c) either action or state of being.
R11 c. either action or state of being	**S12** Circle the action verbs in the following list: **are, write, enter, composition, compose, learns, will be.**
R12 **write, enter, compose, learns**	**S13** Another name for a state-of-being verb is a(n) ______________ ______________ verb.
R13 linking	**S14** Circle the linking verbs in the following list: **was, would have been, thought, am, teach.**
R14 **was, would have been, am**	**S15** To be a sentence, a statement (must have, need not have) at least one verb. A sentence (may, may not) have more than one verb.
R15 must have, may	**S16** Which of the following statements do not contain verbs? a. **The home computer market** b. **The market is expanding** c. **The market in home computers** d. **The market has expanded**
R16 a, c	**S17** Underline the verbs in the following sentences: a. **The text of the speech will be published in tomorrow's paper.** b. **Greg showed Cindy the book he had been reading.** c. **Will you send me a copy of your report when you have finished it?** d. **Explain to me why you are late.**
R17 a. **will be published** b. **showed, had been reading** c. **Will send, have finished** d. **Explain, are**	

Turn to Exercises 1-1 and 1-2.

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So far we have looked at the two most important parts of speech, nouns and verbs, and we have also looked at pronouns, which are noun substitutes. These three parts of speech are used to form the core of a sentence. The remaining parts of speech are used to add more information.

ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are words that *modify*—describe—nouns or pronouns. They answer questions such as *what kind*, *how many*, and *which one*. Which of the following adjectives describe your boss? *tall*, *short*, *young*, *old*, *jovial*, *successful*, *sullen*, *incompetent*, *energetic*, *demanding*, *inefficient*, *unreasonable*, or *fair*.

Adjectives usually precede the nouns and pronouns they modify, but they may follow these words, especially when they are used with linking verbs. In the following real estate ad, all adjectives have been italicized. Again some of the italicized words may look to you like other parts of speech. They have been italicized because in this passage they are being used as adjectives. Notice that the words *a*, *an*, and *the* have all been italicized. As you will learn, these words form a special group of adjectives known as **articles**.

***Luxury* Home in *Dramatic Country* Setting** *This stunning fieldstone* and *cedar contemporary* home is dramatically situated on *three wooded* acres overlooking *the beautiful* Jacksonburg River in *desirable* Woodland Township. Enhanced by *terraced* landscaping, *this outstanding* home affords *four generous* bedrooms, *three marble* bathrooms, *an 18' × 16' artist's* studio, *an enormous stone* fireplace in *a breathtaking* living room with *cathedral* ceiling, and *a heated 38' × 20' in-ground* pool. *A peaceful* retreat with *direct* access to *New Jersey corporate* centers allows you *superb contemporary* living.

ADVERBS

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They answer such questions as *when*, *how*, *where*, and *to what extent*. Adverbs may either precede or follow the verbs they modify, but adverbs usually precede the adjectives and adverbs they modify.

Adverbs modifying verbs:

Mr. Forte spoke *rapidly* and *loudly*.
He arrived *late* and *slowly* walked to the front of the room.
I put the report *there*.

Adverbs modifying adjectives:

She is *extremely* conscientious.
Our equipment is *too* old.
Needlessly complicated instructions annoy me.

Adverbs modifying adverbs:

He performs his duties *exceptionally* well.
She arrived *surprisingly* early.
The applicant responded *somewhat* nervously to the interviewer's questions.

As the above sentences show, most adverbs end in *ly*.

PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions show the relationship between a noun or noun equivalent (called the *object* of the preposition) and another word in the sentence. The preposition and its object, along with any modifiers, form a **prepositional phrase**. These phrases usually function as adjectives or adverbs. Common prepositions include *at*, *by*, *for*, *from*, *in*, *of*, *to*, and *with*.

Key: m = modifiers,
op = object of the preposition,
p = preposition,

prepositional phrase	prepositional phrase	prepositional phrase
p m op *at* the office	p m m op *in* the foreseeable future	p op *from* Seattle
p m op *by* the door	p m op *of* the employees	p m op *with* your approval
p m m op *for* a few days	p m op *to* the customers	

We will discuss prepositions in detail in Chapter 12. For the present it is important to recognize prepositional phrases as modifiers and to be able to distinguish them from sentence subjects.

CONJUNCTIONS

Conjunctions connect words or groups of words. The most common conjunctions—including *and*, *but*, *or*, and *nor*—are called coordinating conjunctions. They act as connectors between equal (coordinate) parts of sentences. Other conjunctions such as *since*, *because*, *if*, *although*, *unless*, and *before* are known as subordinating conjunctions. These connectors show a relationship or dependency of one sentence part to another.

Notice the conjunctions in the following sentences:

Ms. Shurley *and* Mr. Gross were promoted.
They were promoted, *but* I was not.
Give me a promotion *or* I will look for another job.
I feel disappointed *because* I was not promoted.
I intend to look for another job *if* I am not promoted soon.

In each of the preceding sentences, the conjunction is placed between the two sentence parts that it connects. However, some conjunctions may be placed at the beginning of a sentence rather than between the sentence parts. For example, we could rewrite the last example this way:

If I am not promoted soon, I intend to look for another job.

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INTERJECTIONS

An interjection is a word used to show strong feelings or sudden emotions. An interjection usually is followed by an exclamation point or a comma. Because interjections do not contribute to the basic meaning of a sentence, they are seldom used in business writing apart from advertising copy. Look at these examples:

Wow! Look at the quality of this reproduction.
Oh, no! The IRS is going to audit me.
Oh, I don't believe that will happen.

SUMMING UP

We have now looked at each part of speech. Every sentence must contain at least two of the parts of speech, a noun and a verb. Most sentences contain more. Very few, however, contain all eight. Here is one that does:

interjection pronoun noun preposition noun verb adverb adjective conjunction adjective
Yes, your knowledge of grammar will be very useful and rewarding.

Business English was written to help you attain this knowledge and to develop the ability to apply it in your writing and speaking.

PROGRAMMED REINFORCEMENT

S18 The two parts of speech that describe or modify other words are called ________ and ________ .

R18 adjectives, adverbs

S19 a. ________ modify nouns and pronouns.
b. ________ modify verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

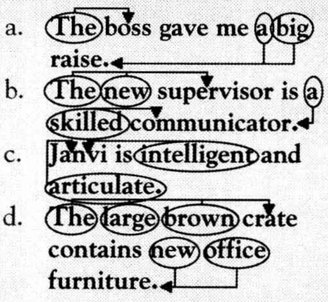
R19 a. adjectives, b. adverbs

S20 Circle the adjectives in the following list: **seven, efficient, the, truly, being, Bob, me, a, happy.**

R20 **seven, efficient, the, a, happy**

S21 Circle the adjectives in the following sentences. Draw a line to the words they modify.
a. **The boss gave me a big raise.**
b. **The new supervisor is a skilled communicator.**
c. **Janvi is intelligent and articulate.**
d. **The large brown crate contains new office furniture.**

R21



a. **The boss gave me a big raise.**
b. **The new supervisor is a skilled communicator.**
c. **Janvi is intelligent and articulate.**
d. **The large brown crate contains new office furniture.**

S22 Words that answer questions such as *what kind, how many,* and *which one* are ________ .

R22 adjectives

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