

## Eliminate Empty Words and Phrases – 1

Vague terms and nouns (such as *to be* verbs, *involve*, *center around*, *aspect*, *element*, *factor*, *field*, *kind*, *nature*) can lead to wordy sentences.

*We were arguing about*  
~~The nature of our argument involved~~ whether to go to the  
^  
7:15 or the 9:45 show.

*worried*  
The frost ~~was worrisome~~ to the citrus growers.  
^

Intensifiers (such as *very*, *more*, *most*, *best*, *quite*) and other modifiers can also be empty words. As you revise, consider whether every adverb and adjective is necessary.

He bore a ~~very~~ strong resemblance to his father. [unnecessary intensifier]

The sweater was ~~an~~ *absolutely* perfect fit. [unnecessary adverb]

Her hometown was ~~rather~~ typical of small-town America.  
[unnecessary adverb]

Many empty phrases (such as *I think, in my opinion, I am going to discuss, as you know, and needless to say*) can be eliminated from a sentence without affecting its meaning. Others, including the following examples, can be reduced to a single word.

**CHANGE**

along the lines of  
as of that date  
at present  
at that point (time)  
at this point (time)  
by means of  
by using (utilizing)  
due to the fact that  
during that period  
for the purpose of  
for the reason that  
in order to  
in spite of the fact that  
in the event that  
in the neighborhood of  
owing to the fact that  
so as to  
the fact that  
through the use of  
until such time as

**TO**

like  
then  
now  
then  
now  
by  
with  
because  
then  
for  
because  
to  
though, although  
if  
about  
because  
to  
that  
with  
until