

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER

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ON

BULLET STATEMENTS

PURPOSE

The Bullet Background Paper is an excellent tool designed to present concisely written statements centered around a single idea or to present a collection of accomplishments with their respective impacts.

DISCUSSION

- All bullet statements must be accurate, brief and specific (ABS)
- Types of bullet statements
 - Single Idea Bullets
 - Definition: A concise written statement of a single idea or concept
 - Cannot delineate
 - Must serve purpose
 - Accomplishment-Impact Bullets
 - Definition: A concise written statement of a person's single accomplishment and its impact on the unit mission, organization, etc.
 - Must clearly state a single accomplishment
 - Must have an impact
 - Impact can be implied (Specific Achievement) or expressly stated
 - Strive to relate impact to the unit mission, organization, etc.
 - Make impact clear to those not familiar with career field, unique terminology, jargon, etc.
 - Expressly stated impact should strengthen bullet statement
 - Expressly stated impact should put accomplishment into perspective
 - Accomplishment element must always precede impact element
 - Types of Accomplishment-Impact Bullets
 - Action Verb: Accomplishment begins with strong, descriptive action verb
 - Modified Verb: Accomplishment begins with modifier (typically adverb)
 - Specific Achievement: Impact is implied, not expressly stated

SUMMARY

This paper summarizes characteristics of Single Idea and Accomplishment-Impact bullet statements.

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THE BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER

An increasingly popular version of the background paper is the “bullet” background paper. The bullet format provides a concise, chronological evolution of a problem, a complete summary of an attached staff package or a more detailed explanation of what appears in an attached talking paper.

Use the first paragraph to identify the main thrust of the paper.

Main ideas follow the intro paragraph and may be as long as several sentences or as short as one word (such as “Advantages”).

- Secondary items follow with a single dash and tertiary items follow with multiple indented dashes. Secondary and tertiary items can be as short as a word or as long as several sentences.
- Format varies.
 - Center title (all capital letters); use 1-inch margins all around; single space the text; double space between items—except double space title and triple space to text; use appropriate punctuation in paragraphs and complete thoughts.
 - Headings such as SUBJECT, PROBLEM, BACKGROUND, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, or RECOMMENDATION are optional.

Keys to developing a good backgrounder:

- Write the paper according to the knowledge level of the user; i.e., a person who is very knowledgeable on the subject won’t require as much detail as one who knows very little.
- Emphasize main points.
- Attach additional support data; refer to it in the backgrounder.
- Require minimum length to achieve brevity with short transitions.
- End with concluding remarks or recommendations.

Include an identification line (author’s rank and name, organization, office symbol, phone number, typist’s initials, and date) on the first page 1 inch from the bottom of the page.

**NOTE: Triple space equal 2 blank lines
Double space equal 1 blank line**

REMEMBER: When subordinating bullets never use a double-dash (--) without a single dash (-), or a triple-dash (---) without a double-dash (--), etc.

- Main bullet
 - Secondary bullet
 - Tertiary bullet
 - Tertiary bullet
 - Secondary bullet
- Main bullet

Mrs. Wilson/ACSC/CCA/3-2295/cab/7 Apr 03

1-inch left and right margins

1-inch top and bottom margins

TYPES OF BULLET STATEMENTS

1. Single Idea Bullets ~ This type of bullet is typically used for Talking Papers, Point Papers and Bullet Background Papers. Various examples can be found on the sample BBPs and in the Display Dot punctuation guidelines on pages 289-290.

2. Accomplishment-Impact Bullets ~ This type of bullet is typically used in performance reports (EPR, OPR, etc.), recommendations, and award submissions (Air Force IMT 1206). These bullets typically describe someone's work performance (good or bad) and/or noteworthy off-duty pursuits. For further help on how to develop accomplishment-impact bullet statements, see pages 226-235.

- **The Accomplishment Element:** This portion briefly describes the person's actions or behavior. Keep the following questions in mind as you construct the accomplishment element of your bullet statement:
 - What did the person (or group) do?
 - What was the success (or, less often, the failure)?
 - Might some terms be unfamiliar to readers outside this career field?
- **The Impact Element:** The impact element describes the results of the accomplishment and it may be either expressly stated or implied. The impact element is vital to describing the relative importance of the action. Keep the following questions in mind as you construct the impact element of your bullet statement:
 - What is the impact on the mission of the organization or the Air Force?
 - Is this impact statement accurate in scope and strength?
 - Does it put things into perspective?

There are three variations of the accomplishment-impact bullet. In most performance related documents (i.e., performance reports, award submissions, etc.), the Action Verb and Modified Verb variations are predominantly used, whereas the Specific Achievement variation is used sparingly.

- **Action Verb:** The accomplishment element begins with a strong action verb and ends with an expressly stated impact element.
 - **Developed** new customer sign-in log reducing customer complaints by 35 percent
 - **Implemented** a schedule to pick up customer equipment items; reduced delays by 5 days
 - **Conducted** 10 staff assistance visits this year
 - **Ensured** all units received an EXCELLENT rating on their IG inspections
 - **Selected** two units for Air Force-wide recognition
- **Modified Verb:** The accomplishment element begins with a modifier in front of the action verb and ends with an expressly stated impact element.
 - **Consistently** exceeded all standards of ... [*Consistently* modifies the verb *exceeded*]
 - **Solely** responsible for production increases in ... [*Solely* modifies the verb *responsible*]
- **Specific Achievement:** The accomplishment element may begin with a noun, verb or modifier; the impact of the accomplishment is implied. Specific Achievement bullets are primarily used to describe professional development or personal attainment.
 - Wing NCO of the Quarter for Jul-Sep 2004
 - CCAF degree in Aeronautical Systems Technology
 - Tirelessly maintained 4.0 GPA towards Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering