Tidy up wordy phrases

Make sentences concise by eliminating wordy phrases.

*Wordy:* In a situation in which a class is overenrolled, you may request that the instructor force-add you.
*Concise:* When a class is overenrolled, you may ask the instructor to force-add you.

*Wordy:* I will now make a few observations concerning the matter of contingency funds.
*Concise:* I will now make a few observations about contingency funds.

*Wordy:* There is a need for more careful inspection of all welds.
*Concise:* You must inspect all welds more carefully.

*Inspect all welds more carefully.*

(Williams, 1985, p. 79)

**Words to use**

Here are some words you can use to de-clutter wordy phrases:

---

Instead of . . .

- the reason for
- for the reason that
- due to the fact that
- owing to the fact that
- in light of the fact that
- considering the fact that
- on the grounds that
- this is why

Use . . .

- because, since, why
Instead of . . .

- despite the fact that
- regardless of the fact that
- notwithstanding the fact that

Use . . .

- although, even, though

Instead of . . .

- in the event that
- if it should transpire/happen that
- under circumstances in which

Use . . .

- if

Instead of . . .

- on the occasion of
- in a situation in which
- under circumstances in which

Use . . .

- when

Instead of . . .

- as regards
- in reference to
- with regard to
- concerning the matter of
- where . . . is concerned

Use . . .
• about

Instead of . . .
• it is crucial that
• it is necessary that
• there is a need/necessity for
• it is important that
• it is incumbent upon
• cannot be avoided

Use . . .
• must, should

Instead of . . .
• is able to
• has the opportunity to
• is in a position to
• has the capacity for
• has the ability to

Use . . .
• can

Instead of . . .
• it is possible that
• there is a chance that
• it could happen that
• the possibility exists for

Use . . .
• may, might, can, could
Instead of . . .

- prior to
- in anticipation of
- subsequent to
- following on
- at the same time as
- simultaneously with

Use . . .

- before, after, as