

Slide 1

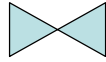
AT THE HEART OF COMMUNICATION: ACROSS
DISCIPLINES AND AROUND THE WORLD

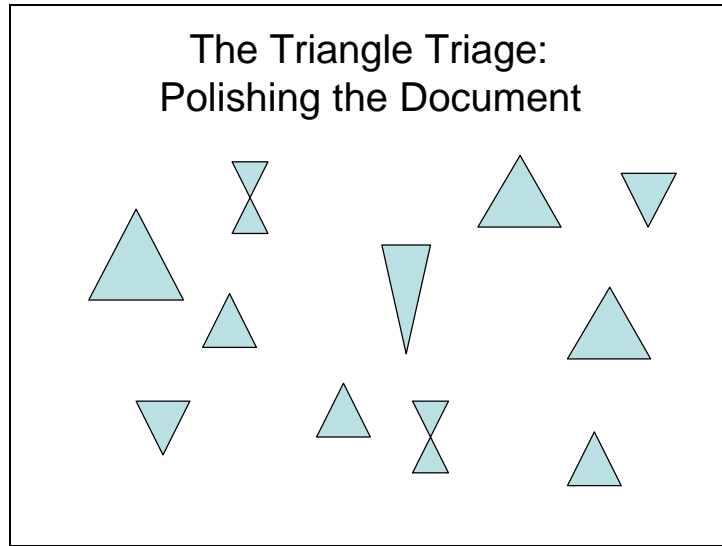
Plain Language Association International
Fourth Biennial Conference
September 29, 2002

TRIANGLE TRIAGE TECHNIQUE:
POLISHING THE DOCUMENT

Polisher: M. Louise Lantzy
mlantzy@law.syr.edu

Syracuse University College of Law





TRIANGLE TRIAGE TECHNIQUE: POLISHING THE DOCUMENT

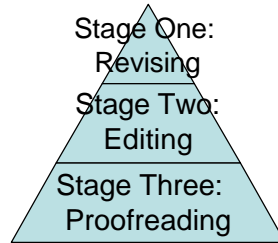
Underlying Principles

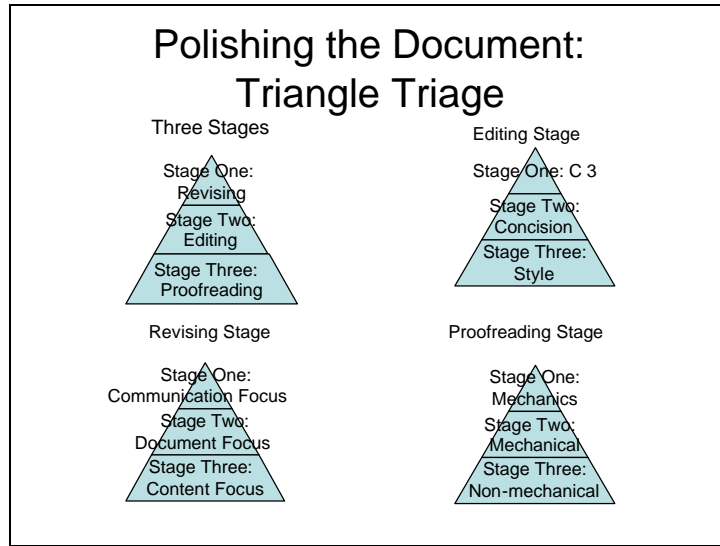
“There is no such thing as good writing.
There is only good rewriting.” Brandeis

“All written work needs improving; all writers
can improve.” Anon.

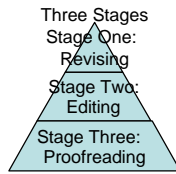
Polishing the Document:

Three Stages

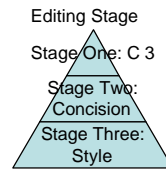
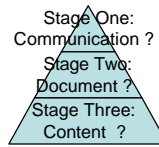




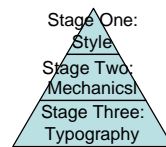
Polishing the Document: Triangle Triage



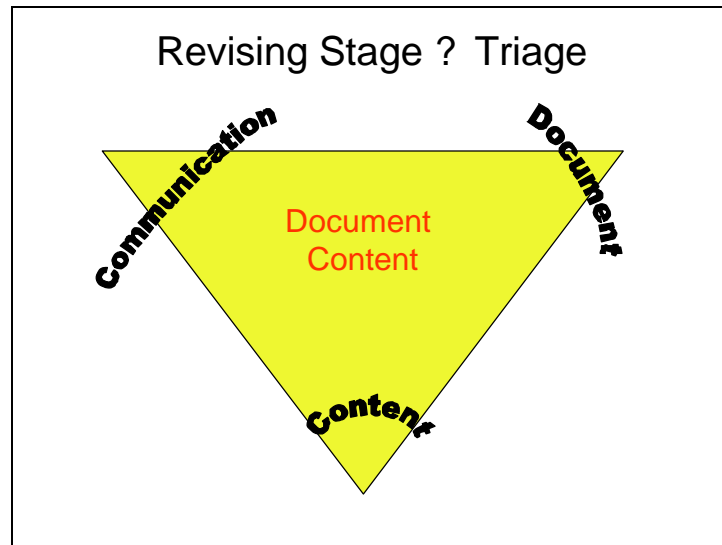
Revising Stage



Proofreading Stage



Slide 7

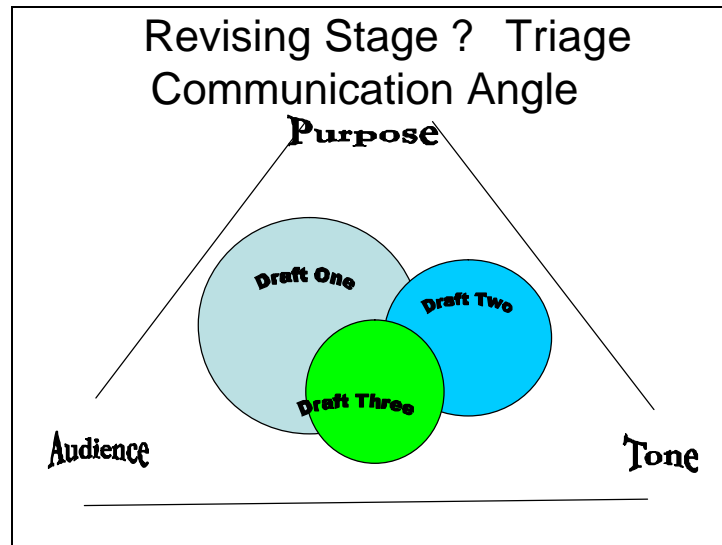


***Purpose of the communication: Focused from the end back to the beginning

*** Anticipated Audience of the communication

*** Tone or persona projected to the audience and for what purpose

Slide 8




*** Purpose of the communication: Focused from the end back to the beginning

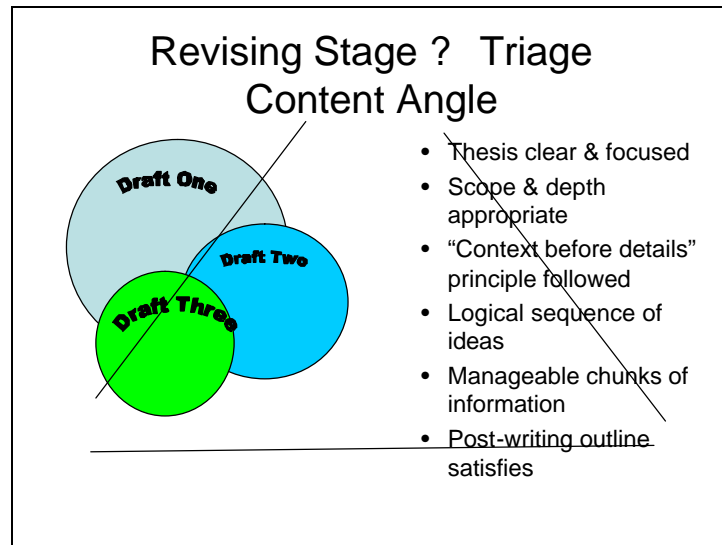
*** Anticipated Audience of the communication

*** Tone or persona projected to the audience and for what purpose

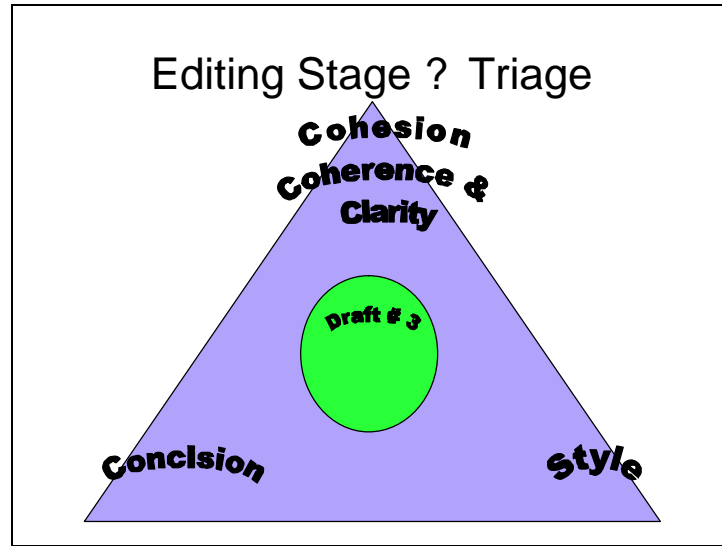
Revising Stage ? Triage
Document Angle

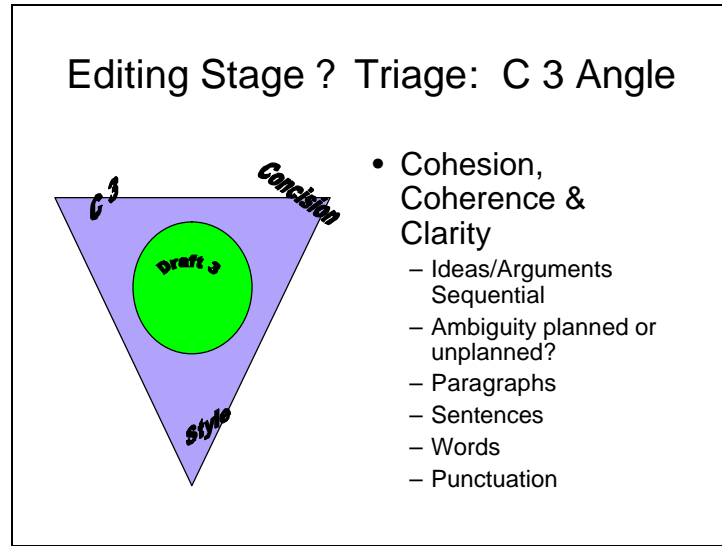


- Traditional document format
- Headings and subheadings
- Numbering
- Roadmaps
- Length appropriate



Renovations: essential in; non-essential out





C 3

Ideas/Arguments Sequential

- Generality v. specificity
- Vagueness v. precision
- Abstraction v. concreteness
- most importance to less important
- strongest to weakest
- Chronological/topical/players/

Ambiguity (purposeless)

- Semantic- word
- Syntactical-sentence (Punctuation, modification, & pronoun reference)
- Contextual- document

Paragraphs

- Manageable chunks
- Visually inviting
- One idea per
- Topic sentence
- Concluding sentence
- Signposts (headings and subheadings)
- Transitions within
- Connections between

Sentences

- Concrete subjects & action verbs
- Voice appropriate to purpose
- Dovetailing
 - Old to new,
 - key words, phrases, repeated

pronoun linkage
transitions

Core ideas in main clause
Sentence combining: from clause to phrase to single word/s
Right branching sentences

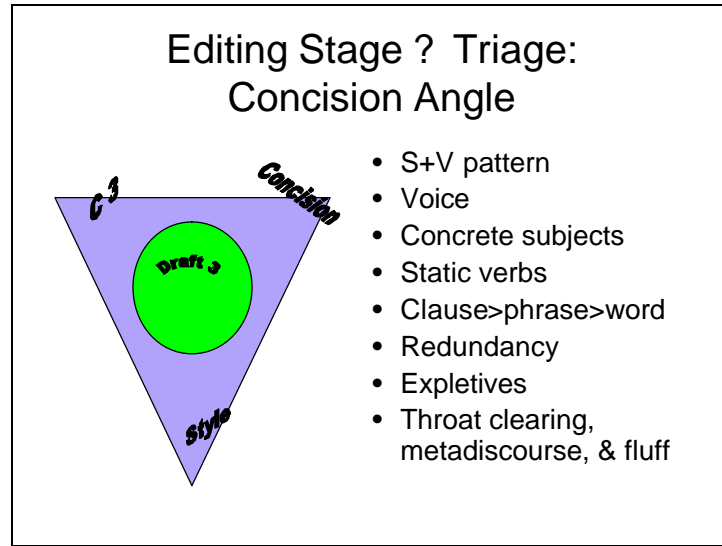
Words

Legalese, jargon, colloquialism, terms of art
Nominalizations
Diction matches PAT

Punctuation

Follows standard English rules
Serial comma used
, which and that: nonessential or essential

comments on whole of sentence,
consistency of form



C 3

Ideas/Arguments Sequential

Generality v. specificity

Vagueness v. precision

Abstraction v. concreteness

most importance to less important

strongest to weakest

Chronological/topical/players/

Ambiguity (purposeless)

Semantic- word

Syntactical-sentence (Punctuation, modification, & pronoun reference)

Contextual- document

Paragraphs

Manageable chunks

Visually inviting

One idea per

Topic sentence

Concluding sentence

Signposts (headings and subheadings)

Transitions within

Connections between

Sentences

Concrete subjects & action verbs

Voice appropriate to purpose

Dovetailing

Old to new,

key words, phrases, repeated

pronoun linkage
transitions

Core ideas in main clause
Sentence combining: from clause to phrase to single word/s
Right branching sentences

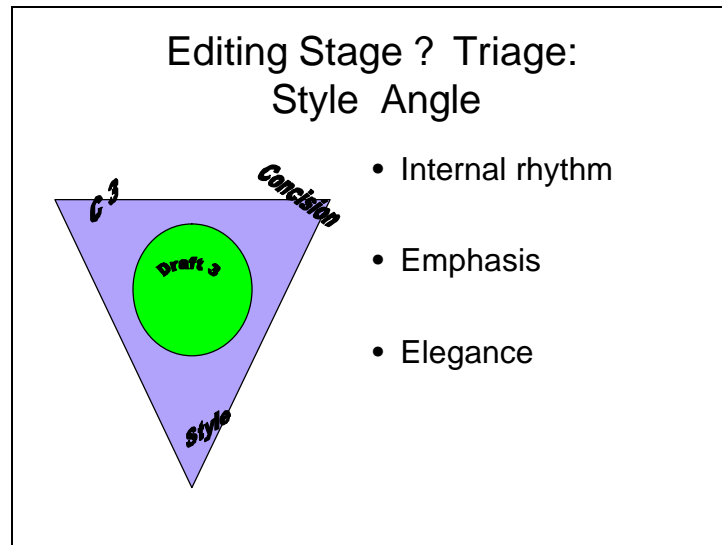
Words

Legalese, jargon, colloquialism, terms of art
Nominalizations
Diction matches PAT

Punctuation

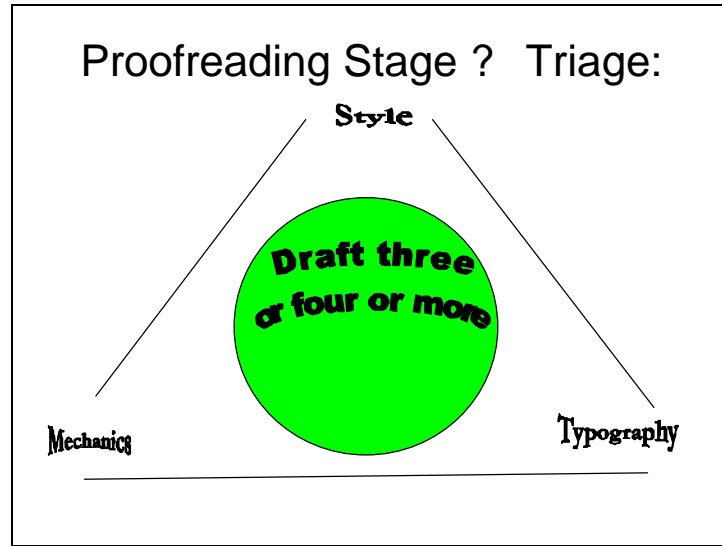
Follows standard English rules
Serial comma used
, which and that: nonessential or essential

comments on whole of sentence,
consistency of form



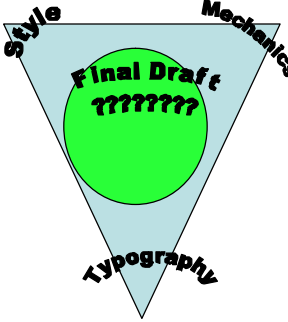
Internal rhythm looks at sentence shape and length, cadence, and meter

Emphasis looks at



Proofreading Stage ? Triage: Style

- Hard copy
- Conforms to customary style manual
- Follows personalized checklist of problems
- Follows personalized proofreading plan
- Document-design consistencies
- Make friends with an editor



The diagram consists of a light blue inverted triangle. The top-left vertex is labeled 'Style', the top-right vertex is labeled 'Mechanics', and the bottom vertex is labeled 'Typography'. Inside the triangle is a green circle containing the text 'Final Draft' and '?????????'.

Proofreading plan: reads paper to tape machine; reads backwards; reads aloud; reads from middle; uses ruler hide, juxtapose pages

Document

**Proofreading Stage ? Triage:
Mechanics**

- Capitalization
- Abbreviations
- Numbers
- Word divisions
- Apostrophes
- Quotations
- End punctuation
- Special conventions


The diagram consists of a light blue inverted triangle. Inside the triangle is a green circle. The text 'Final Draft' is written in black inside the circle, with '????????' below it. The three vertices of the triangle are labeled: 'style' at the top-left, 'Mechanics' at the top-right, and 'Typography' at the bottom. The labels are written in a bold, italicized font.

Proofreading plan: reads paper to tape machine; reads backwards; reads aloud;
reads from middle; uses ruler hide, juxtapose pages

Document

**Proofreading Stage ? Triage:
Typography**

- Spelling check-
mechanical & human
- Missing letters, words
- Inverted letter order
- Spacing



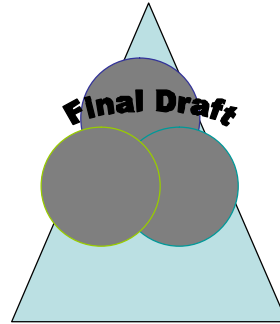
The diagram is an inverted triangle with a light blue fill. The top-left vertex is labeled 'style', the top-right vertex is labeled 'Mechanics', and the bottom vertex is labeled 'Typography'. In the center of the triangle is a bright green circle containing the text 'Final Draft' and '????????'.

Proofreading plan: reads paper to tape machine; reads backwards; reads aloud;
reads from middle; uses ruler hide, juxtapose pages

Document

**TRIANGLE TRIAGE TECHNIQUE:
POLISHING THE DOCUMENT**

- “There is no such thing as good writing. There is only good rewriting.”
- “All written work needs improvement; every writer can improve.”



No photo
available
at this
time.

The Triangle Triage Technique: Polishing the Document

M. Louise Lantzy

<http://www.law.syr.edu/>

In addition to directing the Writing Center of Syracuse University's College of Law, Professor Lantzy teaches advanced legal writing to second- and third-year U.S. law students. In the course, she emphasizes techniques for legal writing and stresses the ways to polish a document, using the Triage Technique to perfect it.