

Want to make a  
compelling point?

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START WITH A STRONG SENTENCE



# 4Cs of strong writing

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- **Clear** – delivers a clear message
- **Concise** – does not always mean short; it means no longer than necessary.
- **Correct** – on many levels: information, spelling/grammar, etc.
- **Complete** – does not mean exhaustive, but it achieves its stated aims.

## Original: Which words are most important?

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An important effort has been put, in the last thirty years, in designing indicators to assess the lack of energy affordability. Nevertheless, much of this effort relates to assessing symptoms and causes of domestic energy poverty with a special focus on its winter dimension.

# Are any phrases too wordy or vague?

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An important effort has been put, in the last thirty years, in designing indicators to assess the lack of energy affordability. Nevertheless, much of this effort relates to assessing symptoms and causes of domestic energy poverty with a special focus on its winter dimension.

# Finding and fixing passive construction

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An important effort **has been put**, in the last thirty years, in designing indicators to assess the lack of energy affordability.

**Find it:** Past tense of 'to be' + another verb (often also in past tense).

**Fix it:** Figure out 'who' is doing 'what'; find a stronger, more active verb. Subject + Verb + Object.

# Is anything NOT necessary?

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An important effort has been put, in the last thirty years, in designing indicators to assess the lack of energy affordability. Nevertheless, much of this effort relates to assessing symptoms and causes of domestic energy poverty with a special focus on its winter dimension.

# What are elements we left with?

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- designing indicators
- to assess
  - • the lack of energy affordability.
  - • symptoms and causes of domestic energy poverty
- focus on its winter dimension.

# What do we REALLY want to talk about?

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- **lack of affordability or energy poverty**

What do we REALLY want to say?

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What an editor is likely to strip it down to

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**Efforts to design indicators** that assess domestic energy poverty, including its causes and symptoms, **focus too narrowly** on its winter dimension.

# Targeting a different audience

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To assess domestic energy poverty, including its causes and symptoms, governments need to design indicators – and avoid focusing too narrowly on its winter dimension.

# Top 3 tips to remember

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- **Select most important words**, place them at ‘power points’ – the start and end of the sentence.
- **Aim for active voice and an interesting verb** – ‘to be’ is highly overused and over-rated.
- **Eliminate unnecessary words** – including connecting phrases.

# Assignment

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Each group will play 'journalist' to one workshop session.

Write:

- an article of 150 words +  
3 tweets.