

I. GENERAL PURPOSE/AUDIENCE

Public administration focuses on the development and management of public agencies and nonprofit organizations. As an academic field, public administration focuses on issues such as responsiveness to citizens, accountability for serving the public, and building expert management knowledge. Public administrators serve in local, state, national, and international organizations. Writers in this field manage public agencies by creating organizational policy documents to guide decision-making, developing justifications for resources, and communicating with employees, lawmakers, and the public.

People in public administration should be skilled at writing, presentations, decision-making, research, and collaboration. They should communicate clearly, be creative, take initiative, use good judgment, and have self-confidence. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), public administrators also analyze information, oversee expenditures, draft and implement government policy, manage people and resources, conduct safety inspections, investigate internal activity, and consult with the public.

Jobs in public administration cover a wide range of fields, including city and county managers, auditors, consumer safety inspectors, criminal investigators, customs inspectors, industrial relations specialists, management relations specialists, systems analysts, budget analysts, human resource managers, and nonprofit managers.

II. TYPES OF WRITING

- **Press releases:** post-event summaries with details, such as contact info, potential story lines, and other similar information.
- **News releases:** focus on the “news” aspect of a communication
- **Policy proposals:** formal writing
- **Meeting agendas:** set items for discussion and vote
- **Policy documents:** short opinion pieces
- **Fact sheets:** numbers, stats, facts (summaries)
- **Budgets:** detailed budgets for organizations, usually for a fiscal year
- **Statements:** direct quotes outlining policies
- **Grant proposals:** documents the need for funding, presents evidence for that need
- **Memos and emails**
- **Business letters**

III. TYPES OF EVIDENCE

- Primary sources (interviews, observations, surveys)
- Secondary sources (books, newspapers, magazines, biographies, journal articles)
- Charts, graphs, maps, videos, brochures
- Quantitative data (facts, statistics, numbers)
- Research presentations

IV. WRITING CONVENTIONS

- Use headings and subheadings when writing long pieces.
- Provide data and statistics.
- Use quotations sparingly.

- Use active voice and strong verbs.
- Target genre and style to specific audience.
- Write the way people think; a down-to-earth approach works best.
- Avoid over-use of acronyms when writing to external audiences. Always spell out acronyms with their first use.
- Include an introduction and conclusion in academic writing.
- Define key terms for the audience.
- Avoid long sentences.

V. COMMON TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- PAR (Public Administrations Review)
- Networking
- Publics: audiences to reach

VI. CITATION STYLE

- **American Psychology Association (APA)** is the primary citation style.
- **Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)** may be preferred by some professors or organizations.
- **Modern Language Association (MLA)** may be preferred by some professors or organizations.
- **Always verify which citation style is preferred.**