**Tips for Successful Writing: Help with Academic Voice in Writing**

Many students are not aware that they have a writing “voice,” a particular way they choose words, compose sentences, and form paragraphs. You may have had a comment on a paper that your tone was too informal or casual. An informal or casual tone of writing voice is not appropriate for most academic writing.

Academic writing is slightly more formal than writing you do in other situations. For example, when you text a friend or write an email to an acquaintance, your tone will be more casual. You may use abbreviations or slang. Any time you write, you need to understand who the reader of your writing is (audience), why you are writing (purpose), and the situation you are writing in (context). These considerations are called the Rhetorical Situation, and understanding your situation will help you to use the correct word choice and tone when you write.

For example, when you write an essay for a class at King University, you need to consider your rhetorical situation:

1. Audience: Your professor, fellow students, others interested in your research
2. Purpose: To write a competent essay on the assigned topic for a particular class
3. Context: University study

When you analyze this rhetorical situation, you understand that your tone needs to be appropriate for a university audience and requires a well-written, serious response to your writing prompt or directions.

The suggested resources below can help you to learn to analyze your own rhetorical situation so that you can successfully complete writing assignments at the university level.

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES:**

**Appropriate language for academic writing:**

<https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/using_appropriate_language/levels_of_formality.html>

<https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/index.html>