



Say: Welcome to the Power Of Active Voice! This workshop is estimated to last 30 minutes.

## Workshop Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Define active voice and passive voice.
- Differentiate between active voice and passive voice.
- Identify the clues that indicate you're writing in passive voice.
- Rewrite passive voice sentences to active voice sentences.

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[Read the Objectives.]

## What is Voice?

“Voice” refers to how a verb represents the subject in a sentence.

There are two types of voice:

- Active—This form speaks in a direct tone by clearly identifying the subject performing the action.
- Passive—This form speaks indirectly, often obscuring the subject performing the action.

Note: Many people confuse passive voice with “past tense.” They are not the same at all. Past tense sentences can be either active or passive.

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[Read the slide.]

Ask: Can someone give me an example of active voice?

[Allow time for answers. An example might be: Carolyn will answer the question.]

Ask: Can someone give me an example of passive voice?

[Allow time for answers. An example might be: Carolyn may be answering every question.]

Ask: What about this sentence, Carolyn answered every question. Is that passive voice or just past tense?

[Answer is past tense.]

## Benefits of Active Voice

- Passive voice often obscures the subject performing the action, which leads to misinterpretation. We strive to write clearly in plain language.
- Active Voice:
  - States your intentions directly and clearly
  - Reduces wordiness (you actually use fewer words to express yourself)
  - Signals to the reader who is responsible for performing the action

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[Read the slide.]

Say: “Carolyn may be answering every question.” Can you tell me exactly who will be answering every question? No, you can tell me it might be Carolyn, but it might not be Carolyn. Consider this statement: ‘Nurse A may have answered the call bell late.’ This statement leaves it open for someone to say that Nurse A may not have answered the call bell late.

Ask: Can someone tell me how you might change this statement to make it true and in active voice?

[Suggestion: Nurse A answered the call bell late.]

## Exercise

Read the instructions below, then answer the questions on the next slide:

- Using Outlook, set up a time to meet the Surveyor to review the purpose and function of the Expense Reimbursement Form.
- Prior to the meeting, the form is e-mailed to the surveyor.
- The form is reviewed.
- The form is e-mailed to the supervisor.

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Say: Read the instructions in the bullets on the slide, then on the next slide we will answer a few questions.

## Exercise: Questions

### Questions:

- Who is responsible for meeting with the surveyor?
- Who is responsible for e-mailing the form to the surveyor?
- Who is responsible for reviewing the form?
- Who faxes the form to the supervisor?

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[Read the slide. Return to the previous slide if the surveyors need to review an instruction again.]

## Exercise: Answers

Here are the instructions rewritten in active voice:

- Using Outlook, set up a time to meet the Surveyor to review the purpose and function of the Expense Reimbursement Form.
- Prior to the meeting, e-mail the form to the surveyor.
- The surveyor reviews the form.
- Once approved, instruct the surveyor to e-mail the form to their supervisor.

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Say: Let's take a look at how the instructions were re-written.

[Read the slide.]

Ask: Are these instructions much clearer? Let's review why each one is clearer.

## Exercise: Answers to Questions

### Answers to the Questions:

- Who is responsible for meeting with the surveyor?  
Answer: You (the user)
- Who is responsible for e-mailing the form to the surveyor?  
Answer: You (the user)
- Who is responsible for reviewing the form?  
Answer: The surveyor
- Who faxes the form to the supervisor?  
Answer: The surveyor

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[Read the slide. Review the original instruction again if needed.]

Ask: Is active voice a little clearer for you now?

Say: Let's look at a few more examples.

# Examples

Passive Voice	Rewritten as Active	Benefits of the Rewrite
Your document has been divided into three sections.	Sheila divided your document into three sections.	Clarifies that Sheila divided your document.
A number of benefits are provided by following investigative protocols.	Investigative protocols provide a number of benefits.	Reduced number of words in the sentence from ten to seven.
The directory is updated each month.	The administrative assistant updates the directory each month.	Answers the question, "Who updates the directory?"
These interviews can be leveraged.	The pharmacy surveyor can leverage these interviews.	Avoids having more than one surveyor performing work.

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[Read through the slide.]

Ask: Are there any questions?

[Click to continue.]

## When is Passive Okay?

- Passive voice is not evil. There are areas where it is preferred:
  - Journalism
  - Politics
  - Law
  - Leadership
  - Anywhere you need to obscure the subject and/or avoid blame
- Surveyors do not want to obscure the subject. We want to write clearly, so we write in active voice.

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[Read through the slide.]

Say: For CMS Form-2567 we must write in active voice so that our statements are very clear, and there is not a question regarding who did or did not perform an action. Let's take a look at some "clue words" that you are about to launch into passive voice. [Click to continue.]

## Word Clues that Alert Passive Voice

When writing, there are several verbs that signal to you that you're about to write in passive voice.

- Has been
  - Have been
  - Were
  - By (when used as a verb modifier)
- Words to use with caution:
- Should
  - Could
  - Would
  - Will be
  - Can be
  - May be

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[Read through the slide.]

[Click to continue.]

Say: Ok, let's practice what we have learned.

## Exercise: Part One

Identify the following sentences as either active or passive:

Sentence	Passive or Active?
The MDS indicated Resident #7 was not involved.	
This change impacts approximately 300 facilities.	
Surveyor Ashley will provide Nursing Services survey support.	
An electronic copy of all materials may be provided to the survey team.	
Darla Evans should set up the meeting.	
The records can be made accessible to the Surveyor through a computer workstation.	
TruHeart Hospital's Medical Records Policy and Procedure was out of date.	
Surveyor Michael has been managed in Region Six.	

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[Read the directions.]

Say: I will read the sentence and you tell me if it is passive or active. Write down your answers, we will check our work on the next slide.

[Read each sentence and wait for the surveyors to tell you if the sentence is passive or active voice.]

[Click to continue.]

## Exercise: Answers to Part One

Use the word clues to identify the following sentences as either active or passive:

Sentence	Passive or Active?
The MDS indicated Resident #7 was not involved.	<i>Active</i>
This change impacts approximately 300 facilities.	<i>Active</i>
Surveyor Ashley will provide Nursing Services survey support.	<i>Active</i>
An electronic copy of all materials may be provided to the survey team.	<i>Passive</i>
Darla Evans should set up the meeting.	<i>Active</i>
The records can be made accessible to the Surveyor through a computer workstation.	<i>Passive</i>
TruHeart Hospital's Medical Records Policy and Procedure was out of date.	<i>Active</i>
Surveyor Michael has been managed in Region Six.	<i>Passive</i>

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Say: Review the answers.

Ask: Are there any surprises?

[Read the directions.]

[Click to continue.]

## Exercise: Part Two

Rewrite the following passive sentences:

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is a standard of practice organization used by surveyors for information.
- After several months, 36 surveys were attended.
- They were sent a medical record by mistake from the client.
- The field is populated by ACTs.
- The report is created automatically by the system.

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Say: Please rewrite each of these passive sentences in active voice. You have 10 minutes.

[Answer any questions as appropriate. Time the surveyors when 10 minutes are done tell them to stop writing.]

Say: Let's take a look at some potential answers.

[Click to continue.]

## Exercise: Possible Corrections One

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is a standard of practice organization used by Surveyors for information.  
Rewrite: Surveyors use the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for standards of practice information.
- After several months, 36 surveys were attended.  
Rewrite: After several months, Carla Owens attended 36 surveys.

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[Read through the slide.]

[Click to continue.]

## Exercise: Possible Corrections Two

- They were sent a medical record by mistake from the facility.  
Rewrite: The facility sent the medical record by mistake.
- The field is populated by ACTs.  
Rewrite: ACTs populates the field.
- The report is created automatically by the system.  
Rewrite: The system creates the report automatically.

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[Read through the slide.]

Ask: Did anyone have other answers?

[Review any other answers and provide feedback as appropriate.]

[Click to continue.]

## Don't Feel Overwhelmed

- By now, you have noticed that passive voice is more comfortable. It is how we typically speak and write.
- Learning to write actively takes practice. You will get the hang of it through coaching and the editing process.

Your preceptor is here to help!

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[Read through the slide.]

[Click to continue.]

Thank You

Thank you for your kind attention.

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Thank you for your kind attention.