

Redundancy

Basics

Redundancy

- A correct sentence must be free of serious redundancy and awkwardness.
- On the GMAT, though concise expressions are preferred over wordier ones, the most concise expression is not necessarily the correct one. An option should not be chosen solely by virtue of its concision.
- There are no absolute rules for going with concision on the GMAT but certain patterns are very often (though not always) followed.

Main Forms of Redundancy

- Wordiness

- When more words than needed are taken for conveying a thought.
 - Doesn't qualify direct elimination of an answer choice.

- Repetition

- When multiple words convey the same meaning.
 - Example: 'revert back'
 - Qualifies direct elimination of an answer choice.

- Passive Voice

- When action is performed on the subject.
 - Leads to indirect, wordy expression.
 - Doesn't qualify direct elimination of an answer choice.

- Awkwardness

- Bulky, incoherent, indirect expression.
 - Generally, doesn't qualify direct elimination of an answer choice.

Concision - Verb

- Usually, an active verb is stronger and more concise than an adjective/adverb or an action noun.
- A verb is preferred over an action noun.
 - Action nouns are, as the name suggests, nouns that indicate actions. A verb is usually stronger than a phrase containing the relevant action noun with a generic verb (such as 'be' or 'make').
- *The ideals of the French Revolution became the inspiration for many writers and poets.*
 - *The ideals of the French Revolution inspired many writers and poets.*
 - “inspired” is better than “became the inspiration for”.

Concision – 'That' Clause

- A 'that'-clause containing verbs is preferred over a series of phrases containing nouns.
- This is a specific case of preferring a verb over an action noun. By choosing the 'that'-clause, the verb form of the action is chosen as 'that'-clause contains a working verb (which can be the main verb of the sentence). Even when the prepositional phrases are not too long, a series of phrases without a verb may make comprehension a bit difficult.
- In this pattern, nouns such as 'hypothesis', 'idea', 'suggestion', 'belief', 'discovery', 'evidence', 'indication', 'report' are often used. These are often modified by 'that'-clauses (contain what can stand as complete sentences).

Concision – 'That' Clause

- Suitably change the following sentence:

- *The belief about the existence of God as the controller of the universe is strongly held by many.*

- *The belief **that God is the controller of the universe** is strongly held by many.*

Concision – Verb v/s Adjective

- **A verb is preferred over an adjective.**
- A sentence sounds more emphatic when a verb form of the action is used to express what happened rather than the adjective form with the verb 'to be'.

Rephrase the sentences appropriately:

- *The tower is symbolic of the King's victory.*
- *To critics having an inclination to 'over-analyze', the blue color of the curtains in the protagonist's room is suggestive of melancholy.*
- *The tower symbolizes the King's victory.*
- *To critics inclined to 'over-analyze', the blue color of the curtains in the protagonist's room suggests melancholy.*

Concision – Noun v/s Adjective

- **An adjective is preferred over a noun.**
- To describe a noun or a noun phrase, the use of an adjective is preferred over the use of the noun that derives from that adjective.
 - Remember that in such cases, there is the possibility of a slight change in meaning occurring. For instance, 'in isolation' and 'isolated' do not exactly mean the same.
 - Hence, ensure that the intended meaning is conserved.

Suitably change the following sentence:

- *The instructor is sure that her student has the capability to learn the game well.*
- *The instructor is sure that her student is capable of learning the game well.*

Concision – Adverb v/s Prepositional Phrase

- An adverb is preferred over a prepositional phrase.
- To modify a verb phrase, the use of a simple adverb is preferred over the use of a long prepositional phrase that conveys the same meaning. This is a specific case of the principle that an adjective/adverb is preferred over a noun (a prepositional phrase contains a noun).
- The prepositional phrase 'to a comparable extent' should be replaced by the adverb 'comparably'. Similarly, 'to a considerable extent' and 'to a significant degree' should be replaced by 'considerably' and 'significantly' respectively.

Concision – Adverb v/s Prepositional Phrase

Suitably change the following sentence:

- *Puppetry helps improve to a significant degree the speech and language skills of those suffering from Down's Syndrome.*
- *Puppetry helps improve significantly the speech and language skills of those suffering from Down's Syndrome.*

Concision – Adjective v/s Adjective Clause

- An adjective is preferred over an adjective clause with 'to be'.
- An adjective clause containing the helping verb 'to be' (or any of the verb's variants) is less concise than the adjective itself. Particularly, if a form of 'to be' is also present in the main clause of the sentence, use only the adjective.
- This is applicable in cases wherein nouns function as adjectives, identifying or describing other nouns.
- *Alfred Hitchcock is a producer as well as director who is well-known.*
 - In the given sentence, "is" unnecessarily occurs twice. The adjective clause is, therefore, replaced by an adjective.
- *Alfred Hitchcock is a well-known producer as well as director.*

Concision – Adjective v/s Adjective Clause

Suitably change the following sentence:

- *Rita, who is a librarian, frequents this store with her friends.*
- *Rita, a librarian, frequents this store with her friends.*

Note: This pattern is only redundant and not an error per se; hence, this doesn't qualify direct elimination of an answer choice.

Concision – 'It is...That...'

- In certain cases wherein something needs to be emphasized, these constructions are useful. For instance, if you wish to emphasize 'without fear', it may be useful to write, 'It is without fear...'. But since these constructions are avoided by the GMAT, you should do the same on the exam.
 - *It is with pride that parents relate their children's achievements.*
 - *Parents relate their children's achievements with pride.*

Concision – Prepositional Phrase

- If the prepositional phrase (modifying a single noun) starts with the preposition 'of', it can be changed into a Noun-Adjective (a noun that is placed before another noun and that functions as an adjective) and placed before the first noun. If the prepositional phrase does not start with the preposition 'of', it should be retained.
- Suitably change the following sentences:
 - *A statue of marble was erected in his memory.*
 - “statue of marble” leads to an awkward meaning.
 - *Agra masons built this building of stone.*
 - While “marble” and “stone” can function as Noun-Adjectives, the phrase “Agra masons” seems to indicate a category of masons.
- The sentences are corrected as follows:
 - *A marble statue was erected in his memory.*
 - *Masons from Agra built this stone building.*

Other Things to Note

Noun-Adjectives

- While certain expressions can easily be understood, they are not considered correct on the GMAT. For instance, 'Yamuna river water' is not correct on the GMAT- 'water from the Yamuna river' should be used. Places/locations do not work well as Noun-Adjectives, unless the prepositional phrase that is replaced starts with 'of'.
- Suitably change the following sentence:
 - *Bird population changes occur due to various factors, including weather conditions, diseases, predation, and pollution.*
 - "Bird" in "Bird population" is a Noun-Adjective.
 - *Changes in bird population occur due to various factors, including weather conditions, diseases, predation, and pollution.*

Prepositional Phrase Starting with 'of'

- If a prepositional phrase starting with 'of' contains time period, quantity, or some other form of measurement immediately after 'of', it should not be changed into a Noun-Adjective. Also, the use of a possessive ('s or s') in modifying a measurement should be avoided.
- Suitably change the following sentences:
 - *Jack took less than the recommended medicinal syrup amount.*
 - *A white dwarf's density is 200,000 times that of the Earth.*
- The sentences are corrected as follows:
 - *Jack took less than the recommended amount of medicinal syrup.*
 - *The density of a white dwarf is 200,000 times that of the Earth.*

‘That of’ and ‘Those of’

- 'that of' or 'those of' should be retained (or added) when necessary for properly conveying the meaning of the sentence.
- Suitably change the following sentence:
 - *The hand that finally lifted Lord Shiva's bow at Sita's swayamvara was Rama.*
 - The given sentence seems to say that the hand was Rama, which is obviously illogical. Inserting 'that of' is necessary.
 - *The hand that finally lifted Lord Shiva's bow at Sita's swayamvara was that of Rama.*
- Suitably change the following sentence:
 - *The ideology he believes in is that of Socialism.*
 - The ideology is Socialism so “that of” is unnecessary.
 - *The ideology he believes in is Socialism.*

Reporting Verb

- A Reporting Verb, as the name suggests, reports a thought or belief that can stand alone as a sentence.
 - Since the GMAT seeks to avoid all ambiguity, retaining 'that' after a reporting verb is important.
- If, for example, you were to say, '*The report suggests the existence of the monster was a myth.*', a certain ambiguity would come in while reading the early part of the sentence, "The report suggests the existence...".
- On the GMAT, these reporting verbs should take 'that' whenever they are followed by a main clause: 'report', 'agree', 'claim', 'contend', 'declare', 'find', 'indicate', 'reveal', 'rule', 'show'. It is advisable to use 'that' with other reporting verbs such as 'announce', 'assert', 'believe', 'demonstrate', 'know', 'mention', 'observe', 'state'. Additionally, 'that' should be used when the verb 'be' appears – 'be convinced', 'be assured', etc.

Reporting Verb

- Suitably change the following sentence:
 - *The jury agreed the case was getting murkier.*
 - *The jury agreed that the case was getting murkier.* - Correct.
- On the GMAT, putting 'that' after the verb 'say' is not required. This is so probably because the chances of confusion are little in such cases.
 - *The King was so fair and just that his subjects said he was the sort of king who must definitely live long.*
 - There is no ambiguity in meaning involved in "...his subjects said he was...".
- **NOTE:** On the GMAT, 'say' will be followed by an entire thought (the use of 'that' not being necessary). An entire thought is expected because it is not possible to *say he* (though the word 'he' can be articulated, of course) as it is possible to *say a prayer*.

Usages Generally Redundant on GMAT

- Being
- On account of
- As far as ____ is concerned
- The fact that
- The reason why
- It is apparent that

Remember: Meaning Wins Over Brevity

- Since all the above mentioned patterns are not rules, they must be used only when really required. 'Being', 'the fact that', etc do not indicate the incorrectness of an option. It is more important to ensure that the option chosen is, in terms of grammar and meaning, the best available.
- Eliminate only that part which is unnecessary. Do not cut out in a way that the intended meaning of the sentence is changed. Ensure that the final sentence is neither awkwardly phrased nor grammatically incorrect.
- Very often on the GMAT, the most concise option is not the best option.
 - But yes, it has a slightly higher chance of being correct.
 - Hence, if you need to guess on a few SC questions, opt for the shortest answer choice.
 - In CR and RC questions, opt for the longest answer choice.
 - Remember, these are only back-up tips. 😊

An Exhaustive List

An Exhaustive List

- absolutely complete
- absolutely essential
- absolutely nothing
- accidentally stumbled
- actively + engaged
- actual + experience
- adequate + enough

An Exhaustive List

- advance + warning
- advance forward
- advance planning
- also + and
- although + while
- although + yet
- although/though + but/nevertheless/yet
- Aluminum/iron etc + metal
- AM + morning or PM + evening

An Exhaustive List

- amount + as much as
- and + also
- and etc
- annually + per year
- appreciate/depreciate + in value
- arrive on the scene
- ask the question
- assembled together
- attach together

An Exhaustive List

- attempt + try
- basic + fundamentals
- because + reason
- because + therefore
- before + in the past
- blue in color
- both + as well as

An Exhaustive List

- brief in duration
- but + if
- by means of
- can/may + potentially
- check up on
- circle/circulate/revolve/rotate around
- close + proximity

An Exhaustive List

- collect/combine together
- cooperate + together
- compared to/with + more/less
- complete + total
- complete + unanimous
- connect together
- consensus + of opinion

An Exhaustive List

- consequent + results
- consolidate together
- continue on
- continue to remain
- cooperate + together
- couple + two
- Decline/decrease + down

An Exhaustive List

- desirable + benefits
- despite + still/yet
- diametric + opposite
- disappear + from sight
- disregard altogether
- double + verb
- due to + with
- each and every
- empty cavity
- enclosed herewith
- endorse on the back

An Exhaustive List

- end + result
- end product
- entirely destroyed
- equally + as good as
- estimated + at about
- expired + terminated
- extremely immoderate
- fast in action
- few in number

An Exhaustive List

- filled to capacity
- final + outcome
- final completion/conclusion
- finally ended
- first beginnings
- following after
- free + gift
- funeral obsequies
- fused together

An Exhaustive List

- growth + increased
- heat up...heat
- hidden + pitfall
- hope + optimism
- important + essentials
- in place + substitute
- including + among
- join + together
- joint cooperation
- joint partnership
- just exactly

An Exhaustive List

- large/small in size
- lift up
- linked + together
- living incarnation
- main + essentials
- may + likely/possibly/probably/perhaps
- melt down
- mingle together
- mix together
- more + rather than
- more preferable

An Exhaustive List

- mutual cooperation
- necessary requisite
- new + innovation/acquisition/development
- now + currently
- one and the same
- one definite reason
- particular example
- part and parcel
- past + experience
- past + previous

An Exhaustive List

- period + time
- personal + friend
- personal opinion
- pervade the whole
- place + where
- plan ahead
- plan for the future
- plan in advance
- postponed until later
- PM + afternoon/evening/night

An Exhaustive List

- prolong the duration
- provisions + provide
- qualified expert
- Re+verb + again (repeat again, regain again, restore again, etc)
- really and truly
- reason + why
- reason + because
- recommended + should
- recur again
- reduce down
- regain + again

An Exhaustive List

- regress back
- regular + daily/weekly/monthly/yearly etc (+ event)
- remand back
- repeat again
- resultant effect
- retrospect + back
- return/revert/refer/reply + back
- Rise/increase/soar/hike/spike + up
- same + identical
- same exact thing

An Exhaustive List

- seems + apparent
- separate + distinct
- shuttle (verb) + back and forth
- single unit
- skirt around
- small in size
- soar + up
- specific example
- still continue
- still remains

An Exhaustive List

- successfully + passed
- sudden/unexpected + surprise
- suddenly + without warning
- suddenly collapsed
- sufficient enough
- sum + total
- summarize + briefly
- summer months
- surround on all sides

An Exhaustive List

- surrounding circumstances
- temporary + reprieve
- ten miles distant
- terrible + disaster
- three hours of time
- throughout + entire
- time + when
- to the northward/southward etc

An Exhaustive List

- total of ten
- traverse across
- true + fact
- twice + compare to
- twice as much as the increase
- two + twins
- ultimate end
- underlying + behind
- universal + the world over

An Exhaustive List

- unsolved + problem
- until + such time
- usual/habitual + custom
- visit with
- ways and means
- whether or not
- young + boy/ girl

thank you!



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