**Adapting to Your Audience**

When we talk to someone face-to-face, we know just who we are talking to. We automatically adjust our speech to be sure we are communicating our message. Many writers don't make those same adjustments when they write to different audiences, usually because they don't take the time to think about who will be reading what they write. To be sure that we communicate clearly in writing, we need to adjust our message--how we say to and what information we include--by recognizing that different readers can best understand different messages.

**Audience Definition**

An audience is a group of readers who reads a particular piece of writing. As a writer, you should anticipate the needs or expectations of your audience in order to convey information or argue for a particular claim. Your audience might be your instructor, classmates, the president of an organization, the staff of a management company, or any other number of possibilities. You need to know your audience before you start writing.

**Types of Audiences**

Audiences come in all shapes and sizes. They may be a group of similar people or combinations of different groups of people. You'll need to determine who they are in order to analyze your audience. This guide divides audience into two categories: academic and nonacademic.

**Note:** Your audience can be a combination of the two.