Revising Tips

As you grow as a communicator, you'll develop your own revising strategies, but hopefully this will give you an idea of where to begin. Regardless of how you try to revise your communications, look to have focused readings instead of trying to address multiple topics in a single reading. For example, have one reading that addresses your topic sentences, another reading that addresses parallelism, and another reading that addresses conciseness (repetition, redundancy, unnecessary phrasing, etc.).

1. Read your work aloud
   a. Look for places where the wording sounds awkward, confusing, or unclear
   b. Revise sentences where you seem to run out of breath
   c. Reword phrases or sentences where you stumble over the wording
   d. Remove redundant and repetitive phrasing
   e. Ensure the tone is appropriate
   f. Check for common issues like
      i. Verb-tense consistency
      ii. Subject-verb agreement
      iii. Vague pronoun reference
      iv. Missing articles or words
      v. Parallelism
      vi. Sentence fragments
      vii. Correct use of homophones (you're/your, their/there/they're, then/than, etc.)
      viii. Punctuation errors

2. Read your message as your audience
   a. Is the purpose of the message clear?
      i. Is it consistent throughout the entire message?
   b. What questions or concerns remain unanswered or unaddressed?
   c. Does the style/tone/structure match my audience's expectations?

3. Review your introduction paragraph(s)
   a. Does it serve as a preview of your message?
   b. What if your audience were to only read this part?

4. Review your conclusion paragraph(s)
   a. Does the conclusion wrap up your message and provide a clear action for the audience?
   b. What if your audience were to only read this part?
   c. What if your audience were to only read this and your introduction? How do the paragraphs differ or work together?

5. Review the logical progression of the message and individual paragraphs
   a. Topic sentences
      i. Does each topic sentence provide the main focus of the paragraph?
      ii. What if your audience were to just read the topic sentences of each paragraph?
         1. Do the topic sentences progress logically from one idea to the next?
   b. Sentences within paragraphs
      i. Do sentences progress without any jumps in logic?
      ii. Have you provided enough supporting detail and explanation?
         1. Have you **completely** answered the "So what?" or "Why?" questions?