

## Quick Tips for USAID Drafters

- Times New Roman 12 for USAID action and info memoranda, briefers, and letters from the Administrator. Remarks should be Times New Roman 16.
- Times New Roman 14 for State Department documents, including funding memos, info memos to the Secretary, and appointment/speaking requests.
- Templates for all executive correspondence can be downloaded at <http://inside.usaid.gov/es/>.
- Remarks should be worded as they will be spoken, not read. Example: “one million dollars” instead of \$1 million or \$1,000,000.
- Margins: One-inch left and right non-justified; one-inch top and bottom.
- Two spaces after periods and colons.
- Use the comma before the word “and” in a series: apples, bananas, and oranges.
- Avoid split infinitives.
- Spell out United States when used as a noun; abbreviate it when used as an adjective (use periods in U.S., but not for UN or EU).
- Check your document for consistency (tabs, spaces, numbering).
- Classification and page numbers are not necessary on a clearance page; they are necessary on all other pages beginning with the second page of the document; page numbers are placed top center as follows: -2-.
- Use quality tabs for attachments.
- Spell out acronyms in full the first instance, with the acronym in parentheses. Do so only if the acronym will be used again in the document. Exception: common acronyms such as USG, NATO, EU, and NGO do not need to be spelled out. When in doubt, or if the document is going outside of USAID, please err on the side of spelling it out.
- Use the long dash—not the two hyphens--to separate clauses or parenthetical comments in a sentence: S—s, NOT S-s or s--s. No spaces are left between the long dash and the words on either side of it.
- Use the word “toward” NOT “towards.”
- Spell out and capitalize official titles: Prime Minister, Administrator, etc.

- Spell out month and show dates as follows: December 18, 2007.
- Capitalize “federal” when part of a proper noun (Federal Reserve Board) or part of an official title (the Federal Government); do not capitalize when used as an adjective (federal employees). Capitalize “state” when discussing a specific U.S. state: State of Texas; do not capitalize when used as an adjective (federal, state, and local law).
- Italicize major publications: *The Wall Street Journal*, *Federal Times*.
- Numbers 10 and above are expressed in numerals; numbers less than 10 are expressed in words.
- Spell out “percent” instead of using %.
- Spell check can assist you with identifying some of these errors by applying certain settings and conditions:
  - Select *Tools*
  - Select *Options*
  - Select *Spelling & Grammar*
  - Under *Grammar* section select *Check Grammar as you type*
  - Also select *settings* and choose the following items shown below:
    - You can also set it to check split infinitives (not shown)

