



COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OF RHODE ISLAND

Pronoun Revision Methods

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Eight Methods of Pronoun Revision

For many sentences, two or more pronoun revision methods should be used together in order to repair a single **pronoun** error.

1. Change the **pronoun**.
2. Use a **noun**.
3. Change the **antecedent**.
4. Delete the **pronoun**.
5. Change the order.
6. Add a **word(s)**.
7. Add visuals or sounds.
8. Check all of the **words**.



I. Change the Pronoun

An incorrect **pronoun** can be revised by changing it to a correct pronoun form. This task can be accomplished by carefully reading a sentence, by comparing each pronoun with its **antecedent**, and by reviewing the rules of pronoun usage.

Wrong:

- **Everybody** likes to read messages from **their** family.

Revision:

- ✓ **Everybody** likes to read messages from **his/her** family.



2. Use a Noun

An incorrect or unclear **pronoun** can be revised by analyzing the sentence in order to find a correct **antecedent**, and then by changing the **pronoun** to a **noun** that conveys a similar idea as the **antecedent**.

Wrong:

- The classrooms contain **computers, maps, and overhead projectors** for **faculty members** to use; **they** can help to make online presentations more interesting.

Revision:

- ✓ The classrooms contain computers, maps, and overhead projectors for **faculty members** to use. **Faculty** can help to make online presentations more interesting.



3. Change the Antecedent

An incorrect **pronoun** can be revised by changing its **antecedent**.

Wrong:

- **Everybody** likes to read messages from **their** family.

Revision:

- ✓ **Everybody** likes to read messages from **his/her** family.

Wrong:

- If **a student** has a college degree, **they** will get a good job.

Revision:

- ✓ If **students** have college degrees, **they** will get good jobs.



4. Delete the Pronoun

Delete any incorrect **pronouns** and then (if necessary) make other appropriate **revisions** so the sentence makes sense.

Wrong:

- **Everyone** enjoyed writing **their** essays.

Revisions:

- ✓ **Everyone** enjoyed writing essays.
- ✓ **Everyone** enjoyed writing **an essay**.
- ✓ **The students** enjoyed writing essays.



5. Change the Order

Changing the order of words in a sentence sometimes can improve the clarity and correctness of a **pronoun**.

Wrong:

- **They** noticed that **it** had been painted bright red, so the **drivers** could easily see the **sign**.

Revision:

- ✓ The **drivers** noticed that the **sign** had been painted bright red, so **they** could easily see **it**.

6. Add a word(s)

Add a **word** or **words** that explain the meaning of the pronoun.

Wrong:

➤ **This** is great!

Revisions:

✓ **This room** is great!

✓ **This experience** is great!

✓ **This section of your paper** is great!

7. Add Visuals or Sounds

Hand or face gestures, the tone of a speaker's voice, arrows, and other visuals or sounds can clarify the meaning of a **pronoun**.

Wrong:

- **This** is great!

Revisions:

- ✓ **This** is great!



In the picture, the speaker's hand is waving at the room. This gesture explains to an audience what the word "this" means.

- ✓ **This** is great!



The arrow is a visual aid that explains what the word "this" means. Applause can emphasize the "great" idea .

8. Check All of the Words

After revising a **pronoun** and/or its **antecedent**, check all of the **other words** in the sentence to ensure correctness and consistency.

Wrong:

- If **a student** has a college degree, **they** will get a good job.

Partially revised pronoun/antecedent error:

- ✓ If **students** has a college degree, **they** will get a good job.

Complete revision:

- ✓ If **students have** college **degrees**, **they** will get good **jobs**.



More Information

The Writing Center at the Community College of Rhode Island has more online resources.



Contact Information

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