

Bracken Business Communications Clinic

COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

There are a number of words that can be easily confused. Using these words incorrectly can damage your credibility, thereby making your message less effective. If you aren't sure of a word's meaning, look it up in the dictionary! Below are examples of commonly misused words.

Accept means to take.

Except means to leave out.

Advise is a verb.

Advice is a noun.

Affect is a verb.

Effect is a noun.

Capitol refers to a building that houses government or legislature.

Capital refers to wealth or property used to generate wealth.

Complement means to complete.

Compliment means to say something nice to someone.

Council refers to a governing or advising group.

Counsel as a noun means advice or refers to a legal advocate, or as a verb means to advise.

Desert means to abandon or means a dry area.

Dessert refers to sweet food.

Discreet means hush-hush or private.

Discrete means separate, divided, or distinct.

Insure means to protect against loss or harm.

Ensure means to make certain.

Assure means to promise.

Principle refers to a rule for appropriate conduct.

Principal refers to a school leader or a capital sum distinct from profit or interest.

Site means a location or place.

Cite means to quote or reference something else.

Stationary means immobile.

Stationery refers to paper used for letters.

