“Wordiness” means “stating ideas, concepts, and/or thoughts in an excessively lengthy, redundant, and verbose manner.” A less-wordy way to describe “wordiness” is “using too many words!”

Principles to remember in avoiding wordiness:

1. Distill your idea into the fewest words possible.
2. Do not state what you reader can infer.

Types of wordiness problems:

1. **Redundant pairs**
   Examples: hopes and desires, each and every, first and foremost, questions and problems

2. **Redundant modifiers**
   Examples: past memories, each individual, basic fundamental, true facts, consensus of opinion, free gift

3. **Redundant categories**
   Examples: period of time, green in color, of a slimy appearance, in a grotesque manner, educational process

4. **Meaningless modifiers**
   Examples: kind of, basically, really, apparently, given, various, different, for all intents and purposes

5. **Pompous diction**
   Example: (wordy) After receiving an encouraging response from my supervisor, I made the decision that a review of division priorities should be initiated. (better) Encouraged by my supervisor, I decided to review administrative priorities.

6. **Obvious implications**
   Example: (wordy) Energy used to power our industries and homes will in the years to come be increasingly expensive in terms of dollars and cents. (better) Future energy will be increasingly expensive.
7. **Excessive details**  
Example: *(wordy)* A microwave oven that you might buy in any department store uses less energy which is much more expensive than a conventional oven that uses gas or electricity.  
*(better)* Microwave ovens use less energy than conventional ovens.

8. **Using a phrase for a word (phrasiness)**  
Examples: the reason for, due to the fact that, on the grounds that, this is why, despite the fact that, with regard to, concerning the matter of, it is important that, in a position to, in anticipation of

9. **Excessive metadiscourse (words that guide the reader)**  
Example: *(wordy)* It is almost certainly the case that, for the most part, totalitarian systems cannot allow a society to settle into what we would perceive to be stable modes of behavior or, even more crucially, stable relationships.  
*(better)* Totalitarian systems cannot allow a society to settle into stable behavior or stable relationships.

10. **Indirect negatives**  
Example: *(wordy)* there is no reason not to believe that if you don’t use too many negatives you won’t confuse the reader.  
*(better)* Using too many negatives confuses the reader.

11. **Expletives (it or there followed by a form of the verb to be and the subject)**  
Example: *(wordy)* It is unfortunate that there were only seven people in attendance at the meeting.  
*(better)* Unfortunately, only seven people attended the meeting.

12. **Nominalizations in place of verbs**  
Example: *(wordy)* The committee has no expectation that completion of the project will occur.  
*(better)* The committee does not expect to complete the project.