

Active voice.

## PREFER THE ACTIVE OVER THE PASSIVE VOICE

To make your writing memorable, try to use the active voice whenever possible.

ACTIVE: The committee *reached* a decision.

PASSIVE: A decision *was reached* by the committee.

Linking verbs are usually a form of *be*: *am, is, are, was, were, being, been*. In the active voice, the subject of the sentence does the action; in the passive, the subject receives the action.

FORM OF *BE*: A surge of power *was* responsible for the  
destruction of the coolant pumps.

PASSIVE: The coolant pumps *were destroyed* by a  
surge of power.

REVISED ACTIVE: A surge of power *destroyed* the coolant  
pumps.

To transform a sentence from the passive voice to the active voice, make the actor the subject of the sentence. Because the passive focuses attention away from the performer and because it is usually duller than the active, excessive use of it makes for dull and difficult writing.