

How to Adapt Your Writing for Any Audience

One message.
Many audiences.
Stronger impact.

Michelle Sanders Parks
Executive Director of Communications



**Great writing
doesn't begin
with words.
It begins with
questions.**



Who
is the audience?



What
do they need to know?



What
do I want them to do?



Where
is the best place to reach them?



How
should I say it?

1

Who is the audience?

Same event.
Different audiences.



Employees

“How does
this impact
my work?”



**Other State
Employees**

“Does this
affect me?”



**Leaders &
Partners**

“Is anything
expected of
me?”



Public

“Will this
impact the
government
services I
use?”



Media

“What is
happening
and why?”

2

What do they need to know?

What each audience needs to know.

Employees	Other State Employees	Leaders & Partners	Public	Media
• Building closed • Remote work instructions • Badge & parking changes • Supervisor guidance	• Service availability • Access changes • Key dates • Where to get updates	• What's happening • What to communicate • Any action needed • Key dates	• Service availability • Alternate locations • Dates & hours • How to get help	• Reason for closure • Timeline • Impact on services • Official statement

3

What
do I want
them to
do?

Information informs
Action creates impact.



Employees

Work
remotely.

Certain
employees
will have
access.



**Other State
Employees**

Work
remotely.



**Leaders &
Partners**

Inform your
teams.



Public

Use online
services.

Reschedule
any
appointments.



Media

Share
accurate
information.

4

Where
is the best
place to
reach
them?

The right message in the right place.



Email: Employees & Leaders
Direct, actionable information



TeamTN.gov & Teams Blast: Internal news
For all state employees



TN.gov: Public information
For the citizens and visitors



Facebook: General awareness
Quick updates and links



LinkedIn: Stakeholders & Partners
Professional context and credibility



News Release: Media
Official details and quotes

5

How should I say it?

Adjust your **tone**,
structure, and **language**.

Audience	Tone	Structure	Language
Employees	Direct	Action first	Internal terms, detailed
Other State Employees	Helpful	Summary + details	Operational language
Leaders & Partners	Executive	Bullet points	Decision-focused
Public	Reassuring	Plain language	Minimal acronyms
Media	Objective	News format	Content + quotes

One event. Different versions.



Teams Blast

Fast internal
update.



Email & Intranet

Employee action.



Public Website

Service continuity.



Social Media

Quick awareness.



News Release

Official record.

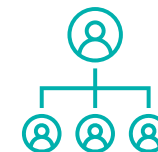
Case Study – Temporary State Building Closure



Employees



Other State
Employees



Leaders &
Partners

**Tennessee
TOWER
TEMPORARY
CLOSURE**

Thursday, JULY 9 at 5:00 p.m.
through
Saturday, JULY 11 at 5:00 p.m.

**FIRE ALARM
SYSTEM UPGRADE**

**PASSENGER & FREIGHT ELEVATORS
WILL NOT BE OPERATIONAL**

**MAIL: CURBSIDE PICKUP AVAILABLE
CALL 615-741-5854**

**BUILDING REOPENS
MONDAY, JULY 13**

BUILDING AND GARAGE CLOSED DURING SCHEDULED TESTING & INSPECTION. ACCESS LIMITED TO PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL.

Blast via Teams (2)

Tennessee Tower Closure Scheduled for Fire Alarm System Upgrade: 5:00 p.m. July 9–5:00 p.m. July 11, 2026

Thursday, June 25, 2026 | 12:33pm

What You Need to Know

- Tennessee Tower will close at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2026, and remain closed through 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 11, 2026.
- The building and parking garage will be closed to employees and the public.
- Tenant agencies should follow their leadership's guidance regarding work arrangements during the closure.
- The building is expected to reopen on Monday, July 13, 2026.

As part of the Tennessee Tower Fire Alarm System Upgrade project, crews will bring the new fire alarm system online and conduct the testing and inspections required by regulatory authorities. To safely complete this work, Tennessee Tower will be closed during the timeframe listed above.

Access to the building will be limited to previously approved authorized personnel. Passenger and freight elevators will not be operational during the closure.

Do:

- Continue operations, including printing, incoming mail, and outgoing mail services, are expected to continue during the closure. However, employees will not be able to pick up mail inside the Tennessee Tower while the building is closed.

Employees who need to retrieve mail may arrange curbside pickup outside the building by calling **615-741-5854**. Additional information will be provided if operational plans change.

Questions

Please contact [Tenant Services](#) with any questions.

Thank you for your patience as we complete this important building safety improvement project.

Intranet

Tennessee Tower Closure: July 9 at 5:00 p.m. through July 11 at 5:00 p.m.

DGS Communications

To: Tennessee Tower Employees
Bcc: All
Retention Policy: 90 Day Delete (90 days)
Expires: 6/25/2026
13 others

***** Please share this message with State employees who work in the Tennessee Tower or may have reason to visit the Tower during this timeframe.*****

The Department is providing an update on the Tennessee Tower Fire Alarm System Upgrade project.

To complete a critical phase of the project, the Tennessee Tower will close at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2026, and remain closed through 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 11, 2026. During this time, crews will bring the new fire alarm system online and conduct the testing and inspections required by regulatory authorities.

The building and garage will be closed to employees and the public during this period. Access will be limited to previously approved authorized personnel. Passenger and freight elevators will not be operational.

Tenant agencies should follow their leadership's guidance on work arrangements during the closure.

During the closure, operations, including printing, incoming mail, and outgoing mail services, are expected to continue during this period. However, employees will not be able to pick up mail inside the Tennessee Tower while the building is closed. Employees who need to retrieve mail may arrange curbside pickup outside the building by calling **615-741-5854**. Additional information will be provided if operational plans change.

The Tennessee Tower is expected to reopen for normal business operations on Monday, July 13.

Please contact [Tenant Services](#) with any questions.

Thank you for your patience as we complete this important building safety improvement project.

Michelle Sanders Parks | Executive Director of Communications

Email

Case Study – Temporary State Building Closure



Public

**TOWER
TEMPORARY CLOSURE**

Thursday, JULY 9 at 5:00 p.m.
through
Saturday, JULY 11 at 5:00 p.m.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM UPGRADE

**BUILDING REOPENS
MONDAY, JULY 13**

**BUILDING AND GARAGE CLOSED DURING SCHEDULED TESTING & INSPECTION.
ACCESS LIMITED TO PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL.**

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News

**Tower Temporarily Closed
5:00 p.m. July 9–5:00 p.m. July 11, 2026**

Thursday, June 25, 2026 | 12:28pm

Notice: Tower will be closed to the public beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2026, through 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 11, 2026, while the Tower completes a scheduled Fire Alarm System Upgrade.

During the closure, crews will bring the new fire alarm system online and conduct the testing and inspections required by regulatory authorities.

The building and parking garage will be closed during this time. Passenger and freight elevators will also be unavailable.

Visitors with appointments at Tower during the closure should contact the agency they are visiting to make alternate arrangements.

Tower is expected to reopen for normal business operations on Monday, July 13, 2026.

For questions about the closure, please contact [Tenant Services](#).

News Release on Website

This is the **checklist** I want you to take with you.



Who
is the audience?



What
do they need to know?



What
do I want them to do?



Where
is the best place to reach them?



How
should I say it?



**Then write
with purpose.**



“

Great writing doesn't begin with words.
It begins with understanding people.
When we meet people where they are,
our words can take them where we need them to go.

Thank you!

Michelle