

## Sentence Fragments and Run-on Sentences: Going Short or Long

Just because words are on paper, doesn't mean you have a good sentence. You have a faulty sentence if it is incomplete (fragment) or improperly runs together (run-on).

Sentence fragments are incomplete because there is a period at the end of a phrase or subordinate clause, which cannot stand alone.

1. You can correct a fragment by joining it to a sentence:

*After six years of college.*

*After six years of college, I finally graduated.*

*Even though I left early.*

*I was late, even though I left early.*

2. You can also correct a fragment by changing the wording so the fragment becomes a complete sentence:

*Watched my favorite reruns* becomes *I watched my favorite reruns.*

*My sister who lost her favorite pen* becomes *My sister lost her favorite pen.*

Run-on sentences are created when you write two or more sentences together without properly connecting them. Simply inserting a comma won't always do the trick:

*The panel scheduled a meeting for tomorrow in the boardroom, it has a long agenda.*

A run-on can be corrected in several ways:

1. Make two separate sentences:

The panel scheduled a meeting for tomorrow in the boardroom. It has a long agenda.

2. Use a semicolon:

The panel scheduled a meeting for tomorrow in the boardroom; it has a long agenda.

3. Use a conjunction:

The panel scheduled a meeting for tomorrow in the boardroom, and it has a long agenda.

4. Make one statement into a phrase or subordinate clause:

Scheduled for tomorrow, the panel has a meeting with a long agenda.

As you can see punctuation can really make a difference:

*What's going on wait a minute I'll go with her.*

*What's going on? Wait a minute! I'll go with her.*

*What's going on? Wait a minute and I'll go with her.*

*What's going on? Wait a minute, I'll go with her.*

If you find fragments and run-on sentences, remember they aren't difficult to fix. Use these tips and techniques so your sentences will flow, and your readership will grow!