❶ Here's the Idea

Sentence fragments and run-on sentences are common writing errors. Understanding clauses and sentence structure can help you avoid these problems.

Sentence Fragments

▶ **A sentence fragment is only part of a sentence.**
A complete sentence has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.

Phrase Fragments A phrase has neither subject nor verb. Correct a phrase fragment by combining it with a related sentence or by adding a subject and verb.

> FRAGMENT:
> **At the beginning of a job search.**

> REVISED:
> **Many experts recommend having your personality analyzed at the beginning of a job search.**

Clause Fragments A subordinate clause contains a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. Correct a clause fragment by connecting the subordinate clause to an independent clause, or rewrite the fragment to express a complete thought.

> FRAGMENT:
> **If you are the outgoing sort.**

> REVISED:
> **You might want to become a teacher or a lawyer if you are the outgoing sort.**

> REVISED:
> **You are the outgoing sort.**

Other Kinds of Fragments Forgetting to include the subject, a verb, or part of a linking verb in a sentence also results in a fragment.

> FRAGMENT:
> **Librarians inaccurately stereotyped as quiet.**

> REVISED:
> **Librarians are inaccurately stereotyped as quiet.**

Run-On Sentences

▶ **A run-on sentence consists of two or more sentences written as if they were one sentence.** Often, run-on sentences are two independent clauses joined by a comma, an error known as the **comma splice**. One way to fix a run-on sentence is to break it into two separate sentences. Another way is to combine the clauses by using any one of the following:

• a comma and a coordinating conjunction

• a semicolon

- a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb

RUN-ON:

Many people resent this practice, one "wrong" answer could disqualify them.

REVISED (with a coordinating conjunction):

Many people resent this practice, for one "wrong" answer could disqualify them.

RUN-ON:

Some firms give personality tests at job interviews they want to see if people will fit in.

REVISED (with a semicolon):

Some firms give personality tests at job interviews ; they want to see if people will fit in.