Passive Voice

The passive voice tells what is done to the grammatical subject of the sentence ("The turkey was cooked too long") **passive.**

Extensive use of the passive voice makes your style dull and wordy. If you have no specific reason for using the passive voice, you can almost always replace it with an active voice verb and improve coherence and clarity.

Passive: The problem **will be discussed** thoroughly by the speaker.

Active: The speaker will discuss the problem thoroughly.

The passive voice occurs frequently in scientific writing, where readers are primarily interested in data, procedures, and results, not in who developed or produced them. If you are studying science, the frequent use of passive voice constructions may seem natural. In a scientific report, you are likely to read, for example, *The rats were fed* in place of *The researchers fed the rats.*

For practice:

Take these passive sentences and turn them into active sentences.

The house was painted last year.   _____

The house will be painted next year. _____

The house is being painted now.   _____

The house was being painted all last week._____

The house has just been painted.   _____

The house had just been painted when the roof collapsed.
_____

The house will have been painted by next Tuesday.
_____

Web site for grammar: http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu/nb-home.html

Here are a few examples of passive voice constructions from some MPS 500 papers:

Passive: The structural and human resource frames are two that **are used** by managers.

Active: Managers **use** structural and human resource frames.

Passive:

When the setup and concepts **are used** effectively, these frames will lead employees and mangers to success. This **has been proven** at Costco Wholesale Corporation where employees pay **is linked** to their skills, motivation, and a job well done, not just years of service commission. Also employees at Costco feel valued by the company because they **are promoted** from within.

The structural frame of an organization **can be depicted** by any number of positions in an organization and the roles and responsibilities of each entity and its relationship to others.

Sandesh always followed through with suggestions with proven outcomes, and as a result, mentors **were encouraged** to share any ideas they may have.

The structural frame of reference is a theory that focuses on organizational goals and strategies. Clear roles, rules and responsibilities **are defined and followed**.

Mrs. Layla Grant, the preceding board president, persuaded the other board members to create the position of executive director and hire a professional manager. Marg Johnson, a social services professional with an interest in systems, **was hired**.

Using a combination of both lateral and vertical coordination would promote the alignment of the organizations established goals. Hierarchy, policy, and rules **need to be addressed**.