1. Do not use direct discourse unless you absolutely have to. You run the risk of reducing examples to long narratives.

2. Avoid semi-colons, rhetorical questions, and exclamation points.

3. Do not address the reader, e.g., “What would you do in my case? You'd go for it, right? Who wouldn't?” You are presenting arguments, not chatting with your buds.

4. You should try to support every statement, even those that are supposed to be based on personal experience. You need to give enough detail so that your examples do not seem to be contrived or made up. In addition, your examples must fit your arguments. The reader has to see a clear reason for everything you say. There has to be a point and that point has to match your arguments.

5. A lot of you interpreted the term “cool” in a hundred ways. MOC was using the idea of “cool” in a very specific way. It is a technical term. On the other hand, some of you used it to refer to anything you liked doing, e.g., "I did ten very cool things during my trip to Taiwan" or "I like these cool pants."

6. The word “cool” meaning “cool” is at least sixty years old. MTV did not invent it. MOC did not invent it. Your ex-BF did not invent it. In addition, wanting to be liked or wanting to fit in with people were not invented by MTV. These are natural human impulses that MOC argues many corporations want to control and manipulate. But you don't have to apologize for them.

7. MOC does a good job of defending its ideas, so you can agree with its arguments. But this does not mean you are supposed to treat MOC’s conclusions as facts. They are still interpretations of facts.

8. But you can say: "I agree with Douglas Rushkoff when he says corporations do X because of Y because I have seen or experienced Z." This means you have personal reasons for accepting or believing what Rushkoff says. But you still can’t over-generalize and say that what you experienced is valid for or represents all teens.
9. Also, Rushkoff made it clear that there are causal connections between specific trends and fads and certain media events. For example, he points out the specific ways in which Limp Biscuit rose to fame. He describes each step. Many of you said that any purchase of any brand name you and all your friends made was the result of watching MTV. “I bought Nikes because of MTV!!” Oh my God!!” You gave MTV, TV, or the media in general more power than God. I am not saying that such connections may not have been the case, but you need to establish them with specific examples and evidence.

10. Red topics had to relate all arguments to the thesis of MOC as determined in class.

11. A question cannot be an argument or a thesis. The answer to a question can be an argument or a thesis.

12. These topics should have been addressed in the first person, with the possible exception of Y.

13. There were many grammatical and other kinds of sentence level problems. If you are working with a tutor, you need to focus on those elements. Please show your tutors copies of our sample papers so they can see what other students in English 20 have done.

14. Remember to distinguish between facts and opinions. If you make a statement that you can’t back up with evidence, then you have to refer to it as an opinion.

15. MOC was not commenting on every conceivable kind of market research. There is a difference between technical R&D where a company is trying to make a better brake pad, soccer glove, football cleat or anti-biotic and the kinds of market research where a company is trying to figure out what kids think is “cool.”

16. From a technical point of view, a company can design a product that sells very well (i.e., it is regarded as “cool”) but does not work very well or actually kills the consumer (cigarettes, SUVs, Stone Temple Clowns, high heels).

17. So MOC was not critiquing all types of focus groups, market research in general or advertising. Some degree of accurate feedback is critical to the intelligent design of anything. In many cases, it is even required by law, for example, in the case of medical drugs. And some varieties of marketing are always necessary to let consumers know what products are available.

18. In a similar light, MOC was not implying that celebrity endorsements are always bad or misleading. The discussion of the Grant Hill commercial was intended to support the point MOC was making about a specific variety of “anti-ad” advertising. Many of you totally misread this.