Use of the subjunctive

The subjunctive is a special kind of present tense which has no -s in the third person singular. It is very common in American English.

- Our advice is that the company hire more technicians.
- It is important that every child get an opportunity to learn.
- It is important that Jane be present when we sign the papers.

Subjunctive structures are unusual in British English. In that-clauses, British people usually prefer should + infinitive.

- Our advice is that the company should hire more technicians.
- It is important that every child should get an opportunity to learn. OR It is important that every child gets an opportunity to learn.

- It is important that he be told. (US)
- It is important that he should be told. (GB)

Words ending in -ise and -ize

Many English words can be spelt with either -ise and -ize. In American English, the spelling with -ize is preferred. In British English, both forms are usually possible.

Examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British English</th>
<th>American English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realize / realise</td>
<td>Realize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanize / mechanise</td>
<td>Mechanize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computerize / computerise</td>
<td>Computerize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptize / baptise</td>
<td>Baptize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some words have -ise in both British and American English.

Examples are:

- Surprise; revise; advise; comprise; despise; compromise; exercise; supervise; televise; advertise

In American English advertize is also sometimes possible.

Exception
Capsize has -ize in both British and American English.

If you are in doubt, remember that in British English the forms with -ise are almost always possible.