



Business writing in plain English

Introduction

Are you uncertain about your ability to write clearly? This course focuses on building your confidence and ability to write in plain English, avoiding false elegance, and jargon.

We do this in just one day by focusing on

- ▶ What readers look for in a document.
- ▶ A simple process for ensuring readers' needs are met.
- ▶ Applying the process to different document types.

We support the process with a course manual, which can be used to further refine the skills learned.

You learn how to ...

- ▶ Write clearly, effectively and quickly.
- ▶ Use plain English to develop a concise, readable and pleasing writing style.
- ▶ Apply the principles of plain English to any document type, from emails to reports.
- ▶ Project a positive image of yourself and your business.
- ▶ Avoid common errors in grammar, spelling and word usage.
- ▶ Communicate precisely what you mean.

Duration

One day.

Who should attend?

Anyone with basic English skills who wants to develop their writing skills.

Activity-based training

Course exercises give you activity-based experience, and can be customised to deal with issues specific to your business. Course exercises include:

- ▶ Analysing and prioritising the audiences for documents.
- ▶ Revising a range of documents including letters, e-mails, minutes, agendas, briefings and notes of meetings.
- ▶ Developing a reader-focused structure for conveying information in a document.
- ▶ Signalling with sentences to get a message across.
- ▶ Revising documents, using plain English job aids to focus the revision process.
- ▶ Avoiding common pitfalls in writing.

Delegates may receive instructor feedback on their writing during exercises. Each delegate is invited to bring a piece of writing that they would like to have reviewed.

The course includes job aids and roadmaps to support your learning. Course exercise materials, job aids and roadmaps are provided on CD for post-course use.

Course outline

▶ **Why good writing matters**

- Making your business more effective
- Adding value to the public image of your business
- Increased profitability through better communication

▶ **Identifying your audience and objective**

- Reader-focused and Writer-focused writing
- Assessing your audience
- Identifying your audience's preferred writing style
- Determining the document's objective

▶ **Planning your writing**

- The pre-writing phase
- Collecting and organising information
 - Preparing your structure
 - Mind-mapping
 - Brainstorming
 - Outliner tools
 - Testing your structure
- Drafting and revising
- Meeting deadlines

▶ **Using Plain English**

- Getting the right sentence length and type
- Using Active Voice
 - Why active voice is effective
 - When passive voice should be used
 - Imperative voice and when it should be avoided
 - Avoiding nominalizations
- Using 'You' and 'We'
- Appropriate words
- Using positive language
- Tables and lists

▶ **Avoiding common pitfalls**

- Reviewing your writing
 - Building a grammar and punctuation toolbox
 - Applying essential editing techniques
 - Checking and amending your document
 - Eliminating spelling and typographical errors
 - Proofreading
- Identifying and dealing with:
 - Fragmented and run-on sentences
 - Misused words
 - Homonyms
- Myths in writing
 - Split infinitives
 - Beginning and ending sentences
 - Synonyms
 - Pronouns
 - Modifiers