



Writing English for a global audience

Introduction

In this practical activity-based course, delegates learn how to quickly create more effective documents for a global audience possessing a limited knowledge of English.

You learn how to ...

- ▶ Write documents that are clearly understood by non-native readers of English.
- ▶ Engineer your use of language to provide simple and readable documents for a global audience.
- ▶ Limit choice in word selection and grammar without losing meaning.
- ▶ Remove ambiguity and inconsistency from your documents.
- ▶ Enable swifter and easier translation of your documents.
- ▶ Improve understanding of your documents by:
 - summarising information in a way helpful to your readers;
 - signalling to your reader with clear document design.

Duration

Recommendation: two days, to provide ample time for delegates to do exercises and receive feedback on their work.

Option of cut-down one day course is available.

Who should attend?

Anyone involved in drafting business or technical documents that must be understood by readers with a limited understanding of English.

Activity-based training

During this course, you perform exercises to gain practical experience of the techniques discussed. These exercises can be customised to deal with specific issues that your business wishes to address. Exercises include:

- ▶ Developing a vocabulary of approved words.
- ▶ Rewriting passive sentences into active voice.
- ▶ Signalling with sentences and paragraphs to get a message across to the reader.
- ▶ Making a document more concrete by removing and replacing abstract terms.
- ▶ Analysing an example document at sentence, paragraph and document structure levels and refocusing it for a global audience.
- ▶ Revising a document using controlled language job aids to focus the revision process.
- ▶ Developing a reader-focused structure for conveying information.

Delegates 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.

Included with the course are job aids and roadmaps to focus each stage of the process, and a CD containing course exercise materials, job aids and roadmaps for use in the workplace.

continued...

Course outline

► Writing in English for a global audience

An overview of controlled language approaches

- Basic English
- AECMA Simplified English
- Controlled English

The value of a controlled language approach to business documents

- Shortening reading time
- Eliminating ambiguity
- Avoiding missing information
- Cutting costs
- Minimising inconsistent and specialised terminology

Translation issues

- Speed
- Automated translation

► Word choice

Using a lexicon of approved words

Limiting the meanings of approved words

- Parts of speech
- Approved meanings

Technical terms

Verbs

- Tenses
- Using active verbs

Writing concretely

- Avoiding abstraction
- Making instructions specific
- Homonyms and synonyms
- Modifiers and pronouns

► Sentence construction

Grouping words

- Using articles
- Avoiding noun clusters
- Redefining terms to help the reader

Getting the right sentence length and type

Rules for effective sentences

- Length
- Topics
- Conjunctions
- Transitions
- Voice

Using Active Voice

- Why active voice is effective
- Changing passive construction to active voice
- Imperative voice
- Avoiding nominalizations

Using 'You' and 'We'

Using positive language

Identifying and dealing with:

- Fragmented and run-on sentences
- Split infinitives

Beginning and ending sentences

Tables and lists

► Structuring paragraphs

Signalling with paragraph structure

Restricting topic information

Presenting new and complex information slowly

Warnings and cautions

Paragraph length

► Punctuation

A controlled approach to punctuation

Commas

- As separators
- As delimiters

Rules for hyphens

Parentheses

Colons, semi-colons and dashes

Full points

► Building readability

How readers use documents

Using the page layout of your document to help your readers

- Structuring the page for clarity
- Breaking your document into readable sections

Using sentences to signal to the reader

Using images to convey information

Presenting statistics and graphs

► Implementing a controlled language approach

Developing your core vocabulary

- Example vocabulary of approved words
- Dealing with unapproved words

Developing a lexicon of technical terms

An editing-based approach to controlled language

- Applying essential editing techniques
- Checking and amending your document
- Eliminating spelling and typographical errors
- Proofreading

Tools available for implementing a controlled language approach