



Class Outline

Business Writing

Write clear, concise, and coherent documents

Business writing is mostly about creating documents: reports, proposals, instructions, memos, procedures, policies, documentation, and specifications. If writing these projects is challenging, if you are a business professional, in sales and marketing, an engineer, programmer, computer or IT professional, scientist, or in research and development, then this class is for you.

Business writing is a skill that requires diligence and practice. This Business Writing class revolves around a three-step writing process—the foundation of all superb writing. You will work on this writing process, review your own writing and that of others, as well as complete exercises to master specific writing techniques and overcome common pitfalls. You will also learn how to write audience-centered documents, the fundamental key for your readers to fully comprehend and use your document as needed.

Contact us for class brochures and other class outlines.

Benefits for Participants

Participants benefit from a structured writing process to create written business communication (including reports, proposals, instructions, sales and marketing materials, correspondence, email, and other documents) that are readily understood by their audience and attain the intended results.

Who Should Attend

All business professionals and technical personnel (both executive, management, and staff) who must present information and ideas in writing

Business Writing

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| <p>Purpose of the Class</p> | <p>Business writing is a skill that requires diligence and practice. This Business Writing class revolves around a three-step business writing process—the foundation of all superb writing. You will work on this business writing process, review your own writing and that of others, as well as complete exercises to master specific business writing techniques and overcome common pitfalls.</p> <p>You will also learn how to write audience-centered documents, the fundamental key for your readers to fully comprehend and use your document as needed. Instruction techniques include lecture, presentation slides, hands-on exercises, individualized instruction, and humor. You will emerge with an understanding of, and the tools necessary to, write business materials clearly.</p> |
| <p>Audience Description</p> | <p>The primary audience for this class ranges from novices with virtually no writing experience to those who are relatively experienced who want to learn a process to streamline their writing.</p> <p>This class is heterogeneous in its assumption of the backgrounds, education, age, gender, experiences, or any other human characteristics.</p> |

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| <p>Major Class Objectives</p> | <p>At completion of this class, participants will have assimilated and be able to confidently implement the following three major objectives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the three steps of business writing to create these documents centered around the needs of your audience: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Plan</i>: Develop a clear, explicit purpose for your document, then identify and analyze the audience you are writing for. Next, devise up to five points to make to your audience that advances your purpose, then organize and sequence them appropriately. b. <i>Write</i>: Draft your preliminary text, just getting your ideas on paper. Revise to reconsider and to include new information. Rewrite to alter and improve your writing so that the document addresses your audience and purpose. c. <i>Finish</i>: Edit (correct, condense, check for consistency and accuracy, refine), proofread (correct grammar, punctuation, misspellings by running a spell-checker, contextual misspellings, mechanics), and format (presenting for the greatest impact) your document for the greatest comprehension and usability. 2. Develop textual elements while planning, writing, and editing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organize your ideas using one of the organization methods, sequence ideas appropriately, and group information using explanatory headings. b. Revise, rewrite, and edit for comprehension and clarity. c. Write clearly and succinctly to meet your audience's needs (audience-centered writing) using straightforward sentences (subject-verb-object) while eliminating stumbling blocks to comprehension (gobbledygook, sexist language, unparallel structure). d. Use verbs appropriately: action verbs (by exhuming verbs buried as nouns), active voice (rather than passive voice), person (usually second and third), tense (present, past, and future), and tone that effectively communicates your message. e. Choose the correct words (including frequently misunderstood words) and terms, and use them consistently. 3. Create a number of business document types, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Definitions b. Descriptions c. Reports d. Proposals e. Instructions |
| <p>Learning Assessment</p> | <p>This class includes a formal assessment that the instructor will complete after each participant submits a writing sample.</p> |
| <p>Instructional Strategies</p> | <p>This instructor-led class conveys concepts, and includes exercises and live practice to put those concepts into action. Throughout the class, the following training methods are employed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lecture for presenting concepts ◆ Discussions ◆ Demonstrations ◆ Question and answer ◆ Exercises, both individual and group ◆ Practical application of concepts ◆ Peer evaluation and assessment |

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| <p>Duration of the Class</p> | <p>Two and a half days, each day 8 hours in duration; half day at 4 hours. This class is modularized, so you can choose the most appropriate lessons.</p> |
| <p>Media Used in the Class</p> | <p>Class materials include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Participant’s guide (with many fill-in-the –blanks sections for interactive learning) ◆ Instructor guide ◆ Slide presentation (including graphics) ◆ Written exercises ◆ Job aids <p>The class also incorporates realistic business situations so that participants can more easily transfer the skills learned in the classroom and apply them in a work environment.</p> |
| <p>Scope of the Class</p> | <p>This class contains seven lessons. Each lesson outline describes the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lesson title and description ◆ Objectives ◆ Topics ◆ Activities ◆ Duration |
| <p>Lesson 1</p> | <p>What Is Business Writing The purpose and attributes of business writing.</p> <p>Objective</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To describe the purpose of business writing. 2. To list the attributes of business writing. <p>Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Business Writing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Three purposes of business writing. b. Two attributes of business writing. <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discussion: the importance of business writing in your workplace. ◆ Small group activity: list workplace documents that satisfy the purpose of business writing. <p>Duration 30 minutes</p> |

Lesson 2

The Three Steps of Business Writing

A step-by-step process for clear writing.

Objective

1. To describe the three steps of business writing.
2. To list these three steps.
3. To describe the importance of each step.

Topics

1. Three Steps of Business Writing:
 - a. Plan.
 - b. Write.
 - c. Finish.

Activities

- ◆ Discussion: the importance of each step.
- ◆ Individual or small group activity: devise a writing process for the “Chunky Chocolate Company” incorporating the three steps of business writing.

Duration

30 minutes

Lesson 3

Step One: Plan

There are three steps to the planning process: purpose, audience, and content.

Objective

1. To describe the three parts for planning a document.
2. To write a clear purpose.
3. To identify your audience and their needs.
4. To list and organize a document's main topics.

Topics

1. Develop a clear, explicit purpose.
2. Identify and analyze your audience:
 - a. Identify your audience.
 - b. Identify your audience.
 - c. Identify your audience.
3. Devise your main topics and organize them:
 - a. Gather information about your main topics.
 - b. Define and organize your main topics.
 - c. Choose an organizational method.
 - d. Consider creating a skeleton outline.
 - e. Write headings for your topics and subtopics.
 - f. Write topic sentences.

Activities

Individual or small group activities: complete these worksheets:

- ◆ Developing a Clear Purpose
- ◆ A Clear, Explicit Purpose
- ◆ Identifying an Audience
- ◆ Audience Portrait
- ◆ Devising Main Topics
- ◆ Writing Relevant Headings
- ◆ Writing Topic Sentences

Discussion: how did the process work for you and your group?

Duration

240 minutes

Lesson 4

Step Two: Write

There can be three steps in the writing process: draft, revise, and rewrite.

Objective

1. To describe the flow of a paragraph.
2. To list the methods for revising paragraphs.
3. To employ methods for rewriting.

Topics

1. Drafting paragraphs.
2. Revise for structure and new material:
 - a. Write cogent paragraphs.
3. Rewrite to alter and improve:
 - a. Rewriting can expand your perspective.
 - b. General rewriting suggestions.
 - c. Some specific rewriting tasks.
 - d. Write in a subject-verb order.
 - e. Focus action in verbs.
 - f. Two final points.

Activities

Individual or small group activities: complete these worksheets:

- ◆ Drafting Paragraphs
- ◆ Revising Sentences
- ◆ Revising Paragraphs
- ◆ How to Quickly Improve Your Writing
- ◆ Rewriting Verbose Verbs
- ◆ Excavating Buried Verbs

Discussion: How did this process work for you and your group.

Duration

150 minutes

Lesson 5

Step Three: Finish

There are three steps to finish your document: edit, proofread, and format.

Objective

1. To edit sentences to make them clear to your reader.
2. To correct grammatical errors.
3. To format a document for ease of comprehension.

Topics

1. Edit for clarity and completeness:
 - a. For the most part, use active voice.
 - b. Ensure subject-verb agreement.
 - c. Write cogent lists.
 - d. Control sentence length.
 - e. Employ parallel construction.
 - f. Use positive expressions.
 - g. Eliminate redundancies.
 - h. Delete unnecessary words.
 - i. Use words correctly.
 - j. Use precise words.
 - k. Avoid jargon, euphemisms, and clichés.
 - l. Avoid offensive language.
 - m. Why it is important to edit.
2. Check grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and spelling:
 - a. Ode to a spell checker—or why you knead to proofread.
 - b. Proofread everything.
 - c. Proofread well.
3. Format for comprehension and usability:
 - a. Putting it all together.

Activities

Large group activities: review these topic worksheets:

- ◆ Principles of Powerful Writing
- ◆ Rights from Wrongs: Confusing Words
- ◆ Eliminating Sexist Language
- ◆ How to Write Good
- ◆ Profound Writing: The Gettysburg Address

Individual or small group activities: complete these worksheets:

- ◆ Changing Passive to Active Voice
- ◆ Ensuring Subjects and Verbs Agree
- ◆ Employing Parallel Construction
- ◆ Eliminating Redundancies in Sentences
- ◆ Reducing Redundant Phrases
- ◆ Righting the Wrongs
- ◆ Using Nonsexist Language
- ◆ Copyediting Annoying Errors
- ◆ Assessing Ethical Choices in Document Design

Duration

300 minutes

Lesson 6

Business Writing Document Types

There are five major document types: definitions, descriptions, proposals, reports, and instructions.

Objective

1. To list the five major document types.
2. To be able to write cogent definitions and descriptions.
3. To write proposals and reports that inform and persuade.
4. To write instructions that instruct.

Topics

1. Definitions:
 - a. Pattern for Writing a Definition.
 - b. Guidelines for Definitions.
2. Descriptions:
 - a. Introduce the Item or Process.
 - b. Write Relevant Details.
 - c. Summarize the Description.
3. Proposals:
 - a. Elements of a Proposal.
 - b. Writing a Proposal that Gets Results.
4. Reports:
 - a. Simple Recording Reports.
 - b. Formal Reports.
5. Instructions:
 - a. Realize your Audience's Expectations.
 - b. Follow These Guidelines for Writing Instructions.
 - c. Write Step-By-Step Instructions.
 - d. Test Your Instructions.

Activities

Individual or small group activities: complete these worksheet:

- ◆ Writing Definitions
- ◆ Writing Descriptions
- ◆ An Example of Instructions
- ◆ Analyze These Instructions
- ◆ Writing Instructions: How to Make a Cup of Tea
- ◆ Writing a Action-Oriented Proposal That Garners Results
- ◆ Completing an Informational Report

Large group activity: Critique and Rewrite These Instructions

Duration

210 minutes

Lesson 7

In-Class Writing Project

Write a work-related document employing the three steps of business writing.

Objective

1. To write a project that immediately relates to your current assignments.
2. To write an audience-centered document that gains the results you want.

Topics

1. Write a work-related document.
 - a. Plan the document.
 - b. Write the document.
 - c. Finish the document.
2. Edit each other's documents.

Activities

- ◆ Individual or small group activity: plan, write and finish a work-related document using the worksheets "A Clear, Explicit Purpose" and "Audience Portrait".
- ◆ Peer evaluation and assessment: edit each other's documents.
- ◆ Individualized instruction: instructor discusses each participant's project and answers relevant questions.
- ◆ Instructor reviews and comments on each completed writing project.

Duration

240 minutes