

Business Writing that Works

This two-day workshop will help you teach participants how to:

- Use the five C's of writing
- Ensure their writing meets basic grammatical standards, including word agreement, sentence construction, proper spelling, and punctuation
- Differentiate between the active and passive voice
- Write business letters, reports, memos, and e-mails

Introduction and Course Overview

You will spend the first part of the day getting to know participants and discussing what will take place during the workshop. Students will also have an opportunity to identify their personal learning objectives.

Why Write?

Many people feel that writing is a burden or something they should be able to delegate. This session will help participants identify the value of writing.

The Four C's

During the morning of Day One, you will discuss four of the C's of writing with participants: clear, concise, complete, and correct. Participants will practice each C through writing exercises.

Word Agreement

During this session, participants will explore word agreement through a brief lecturette and a writing exercise.

Active and Passive Voice

Most people prefer to read writing that is in the active voice. We will discuss and practice both voices during this session.

Sentences and Sentence Types

This session will discuss the structure of sentences and paragraphs. Then, participants will apply this knowledge to a writing exercise.

Readability Index

The Gunning Fog Index, also called the readability index, determines the difficulty level of a written piece. Participants will apply the index to a sample and to their own work.

The Fifth C

Courtesy is an important principle of good business writing. During this session, participants will examine and rank several business letters, helping them explore their own style and preference.

Practical Language

It is important to use words that best reflect what you are trying to say. In this session, we will examine some common dilemmas (such as fewer vs. less) and suggested solutions.

Inclusive Language

Another key part of writing is political correctness. Participants will have an opportunity to re-write some exclusive terms to make them inclusive.

Sentence Construction

The two basic rules for constructing sentences are: use construction that makes meaning clear and keep construction parallel. Participants will re-write sentences that don't follow these rules.

Punctuation

During this session, participants will work in teams to develop a series of test questions for other teams. We have included some key points that you can use to debrief the test.

Writing Business Letters

This session begins with three lecturettes on the steps for writing a business letter, types of letters, and the parts of a business letter. Participants will then examine samples of business letters to determine the type and the parts of the letter.

Reports

Many people find writing business reports very difficult. This session will look at business reports in-depth using a lecture and a small group exercise.

Spelling and Proofreading

Proofreading carelessly can spoil a writer's best efforts. This session will help participants identify common spelling errors and practice their proofreading skills.

Writing Memos

Memos are another challenge that many writers face. We will examine memos through a brief lecture and a fun exercise.

E-mail Etiquette

These days, e-mail has become a universal method of communication. However, there are many questions of etiquette and few answers. This session will discuss some common dilemmas and our recommended answers.

Writing Challenges

To wrap up the workshop, participants will work in small groups to identify their biggest challenges and some possible solutions.

Workshop Wrap-Up

At the end of the day, students will have an opportunity to ask questions and fill out an action plan.