

Soft-Train



*At Soft-Train
Technology Works*

Business and Report Writing (1 Day)

COURSE GOAL: Provide the student with the tools to be able to utilize effective writing methods in drafting business reports and be able to deliver strong but smooth ideas in a written format.

PREREQUISITES: None.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

- Use effective tones and language in written documentation
- Avoid using ineffective words and grammar when delivering ideas on paper
- Understand the concept of persuasion in writing
- Identify the correct formats of addressing the audience

KEY TOPICS:

I. Principles of Composition

- A.** Use the Active Voice
- B.** Avoid Long Sentences
- C.** Use Simple Language
- D.** Delete Words, Sentences and Phrases that do not add to your Meaning
- E.** Break your writing into Short Sections
- F.** Use Specific and Concrete Terms
- G.** Write in a Natural, Conversational Style
- H.** Keep Ideas Parallel

II. Principles of Organization

- A.** Organize your Material according to the way your reader thinks about the Subject
- B.** Organize your Material logically
- C.** Delete the Warm-Up Paragraph
- D.** Use an Executive Summary
- E.** Separate Fact from Opinion
- F.** Delete Unnecessary Closings
- G.** Use Headings and Subheadings

III. Principles of Wording and Phrasing

- A.** Avoid Wordy and Redundant Phrases
- B.** Use Small Words
- C.** Avoid Sexist Language
- D.** Know the Proper Use of the Most Commonly Misused Words and Phrases
- E.** Substitute Modern Business Language for Antiquated Phrases
- F.** Substitute Original Language for Clichés

G. Avoid Jargon

IV. Principles of Tone

- A.** Write to Express, Not to Impress
- B.** Prefer Informal to Formal Language
- C.** Prefer Positive Words to Negative Words
- D.** In a Sentence containing both Good and Bad News, Give the Bad News first
- E.** Write to Change Behavior, Not to Express Anger
- F.** Be your Most Pleasant Self
- G.** Use Contractions to Warm Up your Message
- H.** Avoid Unnecessary Hedging
- I.** Avoid Sarcasm

V. Principles of Persuasion

- A.** Gain your Reader's Attention in an Appropriate Manner
- B.** Awaken a Need for a Idea before Presenting the Idea
- C.** Stress Benefits, Not Features
- D.** Use Facts, Opinions, and Statistics to Prove your Case
- E.** Don't get Bugged Down in Unnecessary Details or Arguments
- F.** Tell the Reader What to Do Next
- G.** Before Making a Request, Give the Reader a Reason to Respond
- H.** Do Not Assume the Readers has been Persuaded by your Argument

VI. Principles of Punctuation, Grammar, Abbreviation, Capitalization, and Spelling

- A.** Use Commas to Indicate a Brief Pause
- B.** Use a semicolon to Separate Independent Clauses Not Joined by a Conjunction

C. Use a Colon to Introduce a List or Explanation

D. Add an Apostrophe and an s to Form the Possessive Case of a Singular Noun

E. Hyphenate Two Words Compounded to Form an Adjective Modifier if They Precede a Noun

F. Use an Ellipsis to Show Hesitation or Omission

G. Use Parentheses to Add Explanatory Material that's Not Part of the Main Thought

H. Use a Dash to Interrupt – or Highlight – a Thought

I. Avoid Slash Construction

J. Put Commas Inside Quotation Marks

K. Avoid Subject and Verb Disagreement

L. Avoid Improper Use of Reflexive Pronouns

M. Avoid Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences

N. Avoid Dangling Modifiers

O. Avoid Misplaced Modifiers

P. Use too few Abbreviations rather than too many

Q. Do Not Use an Apostrophe When Writing the Plural of an Abbreviation

R. Capitalize the Full Names of Corporation, Government Agencies, Divisions, Departments, and Organizations

S. Capitalize Trade Names

T. Know the Basic Rules of Spelling

U. If there are Variant Spellings, use the Preferred Spelling

V. Keep a List of the Words you Repeatedly Misspell

VII. Principles of Format

- A.** Use Wide Margins to Aid Readability
- B.** Use Subject and Re Lines in Memos
- C.** Use Modern Salutations and Closings in Letters
- D.** Use Numbered Lists or Bullets to Present a Series of Points or Ideas
- E.** Put Names in “cc” and “bc” lists in Alphabetical Order