

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/PERSONAL ASSISTANTS AND SECRETARIES

OVERVIEW

Every assistant spends a considerable amount of her or his time communicating. Much of this communication is written. Writing is an example of one-way information transfer. Whether it is a letter, e-mail, memo, fax, proposal or report, it is important that it achieves its purpose. To do that it needs to be clear, persuasive, well presented and devoid of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. Your boss relies on you to be able to do this.

Effective business writing is an essential skill in today's workplace. Ineffective writing annoys business people, causes projects to be rejected, loses support, creates confusion and leads to alienation.

A letter or e-mail that persuades a reluctant customer to purchase your company's product or service, that satisfactorily deals with a client's complaint or that addresses continuing needs of business associates goes a long way to establishing or maintaining your reputation. Your ability to produce a report to senior management or the executive team that is clear, concise and well organized will enhance your position in the company and improve your chances of promotion.

Your writing is a reflection of both you and your company. It is important, therefore, that your writing establishes your credibility and enhances your company's image. This seminar will provide you with the necessary skills to enable you to do that.

Participants are requested to bring samples of their writing to the seminar for use with the fog index. They should also bring current difficult writing requests with them.

OUTLINE

Introduction

- Questionnaire for Assessing Learners' Needs and Abilities
- Sample Form for Helping Participants Set Writing Goals
- Participants' Objectives

Grammar Revisited

- Twelve Guidelines to Better Grammar
- Grammar Exercise
- Reducing Grammatical Errors
- Personal Pronouns
- Verbs
- Correct Use of Who, Whose and Whom
- Capitalization
- Punctuation

Spelling

- Understanding the Rules
- Singular and Plural
- Non English Words Used in English
- Spelling Exercise
- The 100 Most Commonly Misspelled Words

Word Use in Writing

- Why the English Language Can be Confusing
- Spelling Exercise
- The Fox Index/ Measuring Readability
- Reducing Wordiness Exercise
- Increasing Vocabulary
- Correct Use of Difficult Words

Writing Style

- Writing Tests Parts 1 and 2
- Getting the Reader's Attention
- Establishing an Appropriate Tone
- Making Your Writing Positive, Dynamic and Results-Oriented
- Avoiding the Major Pitfalls of Business Writing

General

- When To Use Direct Quotations
- Format of an Effective Business Letter
- Elements of a Good Report
- Terminology Use

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Administrative Assistants
- Personal Assistants
- Secretaries
- Executive Secretaries

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Identify the common problems in writing
- Measure the clarity of your writing
- Use proper layout and style to impress
- Write clear and concise letters, e-mails, memos and faxes
- Learn the 12 principles of effective writing and apply them in writing memos, letters, proposals and reports
- Help your boss identify his or her continuing errors
- Understand the limitations of spell-check
- Improve your understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling

SEMINAR LEADER

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Paul Loftus is the co-author of "Time Well Spent: Getting things done through effective time management", published by Kogan Page.

As a freelance journalist Mr. Loftus has had many articles published in "Canadian Banker" published by the Canadian Bankers Association; *Linking for Learning* published by the Quebec Association for Adult Learning; *The International Management Development Review*, published by Management Centre Europe; *Today's Manager* published by the Singapore Institute of Manage-

ment; *Management*, published by the Malaysian Institute of Management; *Intersections* published by Prudential Intercultural (Prudential Relocation), and *Industrial and Commercial Training*, published by MCB University Press (UK). Mr. Loftus was the cover/ feature storywriter for the quarterly business magazine *Executive PA*, published by Harmsworth Connect (UK) and a former feature writer for the *Bermudian Business* magazine. A full list of Paul's published articles can be found under the publications heading on his website at www.paulloftus.com. He is a member of the editorial advisory board for *Industrial and Commercial Training* and a Director of the Montreal Press Club.