

Effective Business English

OVERVIEW

Course duration: 1 day

This course is a comprehensive introduction to the essentials of written English that will help improve the impact of all business documents you produce.

The ability to write clearly and concisely is indispensable at work: it makes for more efficient and cleaner communications, while giving your words more authority. Achieving this means using the right tone and lexicon, but also ensuring your grammar, spelling and punctuation are correct.

Covering all these issues, this step-by-step course will increase your awareness and improve your knowledge of good written English - and therefore both your confidence and effectiveness in work-related writing.

IS IT RIGHT FOR ME?

This course will benefit anyone whose work routinely requires them to produce written communications and who wants to produce them more quickly, accurately and convincingly. It is particularly helpful for those who feel they need to revisit the rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation and meaning that will give their written words more clarity and credibility.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

By the end of the course you will have learnt how to:

- Follow the rules of grammar that matter, knowing which are obligatory, optional or defunct.
- Use the vocabulary and tone that is most appropriate to your reader to get the best response.
- Stay focused during the writing of any document on both the 'macro' level (structure and length) and 'micro' (grammar, spelling, punctuation and meaning).
- Keep documents succinct by making the best choice of words during the writing and then editing down as required.
- Use punctuation in writing as readily and appropriately as you use intonation in speech to avoid ambiguity and determine meaning.
- Edit and proof to eliminate errors and streamline documents, so that they are always clear, concise and credible when you send or submit them.

These will be learnt through guided practice; written and oral exercises; analysis of different kinds of business writing; and examples of edited documents. Use is made of a range of business texts - from emails and letters to memos and proposals.

PRE-COURSE ACTIVITY

You will be asked to

- 1 complete a pre-course questionnaire to help the trainer identify your needs.
- 2 submit or bring along some writing you in any way wish to improve (optional).

WHAT WILL IT COVER?

The Nuts and Bolts of Written Language

- Grammar: the rules to know and apply; those to question and use with discretion; those to ignore, where they are archaic or otherwise redundant; explanations of common grammatical terms.
- Punctuation: the most misunderstood marks and how to use them properly; how punctuation practices have changed; how to use punctuation to optimise clarity and minimise length.
- Spelling: the most commonly misspelt words; spelling rules, exceptions and pitfalls; homophones, and informed use of the spellchecker.
- Meaning: using the right words; commonly misused words and correct alternatives.

Structure and Style

- Structure: building sentences and paragraphs that guide your reader; drawing a plan of your document before you start writing; producing appropriately logical structures.
- Plain English: the virtues of simplicity and the principles of 'plain English', as illustrated in good and bad real-life business examples.
- Corporate style: the importance of adhering to your house style; its defining characteristics to know, develop and apply.

Editing and Proofing

- Editing for economy: cutting and streamlining your writing for readability.
- Proofing techniques: ways to ensure you catch stylistic, grammatical and related errors before sending or submitting a document.

Reference Aid

You will receive a comprehensive course manual, containing the course information given on the above, for ongoing reference back in the office.

Action Planning

Identifying your goals and a plan for achieving them.