Effective Writing Skills

Learn how to meet the challenge of "putting it in writing" — whether you're writing letters, memos, e-mails, proposals, or other documents. This 2-day workshop is designed to give you the confidence to master what people struggle with the most: how to think clearly and write what you mean.

If you can't get your point across concisely, you risk losing or confusing your readers. If you can't learn to edit yourself, you risk looking sloppy and unprofessional — an image that could extend to your company when you communicate with vendors or new potential customers. To be sure, written communication gives you more time to think than a hurried conversation at the coffee pot or over the phone — but you should use that time wisely.

In this 2-day workshop, lecturing is kept to a minimum in favor of an emphasis on realistic writing exercises on topics relevant to your workplace. You will engage in constant peer review and be encouraged to share your writing problems and occasional successes. In all cases, the instructor will take a careful look at each writer's work and offer detailed advice. The instructor will address any other problems that crop up in the writing exercises.

Who Should Attend

Managers, technical professionals, analysts, marketing team members, administrative staff — everyone in your organization who has to communicate their ideas throughout the work day.

Workshop Objectives:

▸ Gain self-confidence as a communicator.
▸ Be more productive by reducing delays, errors and misunderstandings.
▸ Understand the primary importance of knowing your readers before you begin to write.
▸ Appreciate the premise that writing is thinking, that it gives you the opportunity to look smart and professional.
▸ Edit yourself rigorously with an eye to quality control.
▸ Develop your own "voice" as a writer while avoiding a too-personal and emotional tone.
▸ Organize your thoughts before you begin writing.
▸ Keep written communications efficient and effective.
▸ Create action and response in the reader.
▸ Manage and store email efficiently with an eye toward privacy.

Communication Skills for Technical Professionals

For years, strong technical skills were all that you needed to be successful, but today, being technically competent is not enough. Successful systems people must communicate their ideas, wants and needs, and listen carefully to those of others. Systems professionals need to communicate because the volume of information continues to grow. You need to understand more. You need to explain more.

Whether you usually communicate orally or in writing, this workshop will help you improve your skills. Speak clearly in one-on-one, small group and presentation situations. Listen more attentively to your co-workers. Put power into your written communications. Attending this 3-day workshop will improve your communication skills, making you more valuable and promotable.

Who Should Attend

Systems, MIS and operations managers, team leaders, project managers, consultants, help center managers and staff, systems analysts, database administrators, and programmers. Anyone who works with technical information or technical professionals such as technical trainers, technical writers, technical sales managers, and product managers.

Workshop Objectives:

- Gain self-confidence by mastering the steps proven to increase effective communication.
- Uncover your personal communication style and how it affects all your communications.
- Discover problem solving and conflict resolution techniques that really work.
- Turn communication stumbling blocks into stepping stones of career success.
- Minimize time spent on technical support by communicating technical information in non-technical terms.
- Choose words and non-verbal clues that sell your systems ideas to upper management.
- Diagnose sources of communication problems and develop improvement strategies.

Effecting Organizational Change

Organizations change incrementally every day. To effect a positive organizational change, leaders must first decide where they want the organization to be, and then what is the best way to get it there.

In this 2-day workshop, leaders, key team members and other organization personnel will learn how to develop and implement their own organizational change plans. The process starts with a review of how organizations work, various leadership and organizational styles and the change process. Once the participants thoroughly understand these basics, we move in to the in depth work on analyzing organizational deficiencies, developing plans to correct those deficiencies and implementing and maintaining appropriate changes.

Who Should Attend

Anyone who is interested in or will be participating in an organizational change can benefit from this class. Therefore, this course would be appropriate for executives, senior managers, supervisors, team leaders and any personnel in both profit and non-profit organizations.

Workshop Objectives:

< Explain the various organizational structures, and the pluses and minuses of each.

< Recognize how organizations veer off course.

< Understand the change process.

< Determine what changes are necessary in the organization.

< Develop optimal interventions for implementing change.

< Create and use an effective change management plan.

< Monitor the change process and correct as necessary.

< Maintain change once it has been introduced.

< Solve implementation issues with conflict resolution techniques.

< Effectively communicate about change.

Mastering Time Management and Organizational Skills

To increase the odds of successfully completing any project, a team member must understand how to estimate task work and then perform that work in the most effective manner. Members must also know how to effectively present and receive information and face change in a positive way. All of these skills often require effecting personal change. In this workshop, participants will learn what change is and how people respond to it. They will also learn what information is critical to ?? ...and what methods are most effective in various scenarios. Lastly, they will learn to evaluate and minimize 'time wasters', more effectively estimate work effort, determine priorities, and delegate more effectively.

This 2-day workshop uses examples and exercises to demonstrate the various aspects of handling change. Examples are worked on together in class, with the instructor demonstrating or explaining the operations, and the participants performing the same operations. Exercises are case study-based and are performed by the participants on their own or in small groups to allow them to practice. The case studies are selected by the team from three possible cases — an awards banquet project, a new software package implementation, and a building restoration — thus allowing participants to select a project to which they can best relate.

Who Should Attend

Project managers, team members, team leaders, foreman, supervisors, and managers interested in increasing their control over their personal and professional lives.

Workshop Objectives:

< List and use the eight steps proven to increase effective communication.
< Evaluate personal communication styles and how they affect all communications.
< Design and deliver powerful presentations.
< Explain the importance of time management to projects and the organization.
< List and explain the various types of time wasters.
< Use the provided time log to determine individual time wasters.
< Develop personal strategies for minimizing time wasters.
< Create and adhere to a meeting agenda.
< Develop and use task priorities.
< Develop and use more effective delegation processes.
< Develop and use more effective estimating and tracking techniques.
< Explain the various theories on handling change.
< Develop and use a Personal Change Roadmap.

Understanding and Managing Stress

Deadlines, hi-tech communications, long commutes, crazy hours, two income families and global business all contribute to new levels of stress experienced in the world today. Today's workplace is a high pressure and fast-paced work environment. Many employees complain about and would like to reduce the stress they feel and the uncomfortable aftermath. This 1-day interactive workshop is for those people, and also for individuals who simply want to manage the troublesome stress in their lives.

Understanding and Managing Stress will help participants to be more productive at work, and able to live a more balanced and satisfying life. This workshop imparts knowledge, provides exercises, and teaches stress reduction techniques that can be applied immediately. It provides complete guidance for developing and implementing personal and organizational stress reduction plans. The education and experience can be applied to professional and personal lives.

Who Should Attend

Stress and distress are issues for everyone from time to time; therefore, anyone can benefit from attending this workshop. Business stress management leaders can pick up ideas about how to do their jobs better. Executive teams and work teams can benefit from the experience of participating in this workshop together. A mixed audience of employees, managers and executives is usually beneficial to the individual, the team, and the organization. Small groups and large audiences can both be accommodated.

Workshop Objectives:

▸ Obtain a better understanding of stress and what triggers individual stress.

▸ Recognize the difference between stress (okay) and distress (not okay).

▸ Improve knowledge, skill and strategy for reducing the unwanted stress in our organizations, our lives and the lives of those with whom we interact.

▸ Reduce the level of personal stress.

▸ Increase the ability to face stressful situations, as they arise, with a new attitude, skill and confidence.

▸ Increase the ability to make better decisions under pressure.

▸ Develop plans for stress reduction.

▸ Develop strategies for better balance between work and home.