

Technical Report Writing Skills (Basic, Advanced and Business level applications)

COURSE DURATION:

One day - basic skills

Two days - advanced level

Two days - business level application

COURSE INTRODUCTION:

Few people have ever been trained to properly convey written information. Yet, compiling this information in ways which are easily readable and readily understood is fundamental to business success. This Report Writing course is designed to teach trainees the fundamentals of effective report writing, giving them the skills and confidence to generate compact and well-thought out documents.

In the same way, Engineers and Technicians are educated and trained for many years to become expert in their technical fields of expertise, but this does not necessarily include the art of writing! Most technical people admit that writing is not their strength, and, at the best of times, constitutes a boring, dull and difficult chore! And yet, they also acknowledge that it is critically important to be able to express themselves clearly and convincingly in writing. Good technical writing skills can make a big impact on business and career success!

BENEFITS:

Participants on this course will gain tools, learn techniques and practice skills leading to increased technical writing confidence.

Starting at a basic level, the course will equip participants with an ability to write technical reports and documents in such a way as to help the readers to understand what they did not understand before. Complex matters that have to be communicated in writing can either be confusing or can be clear. This course aims to equip participants with the skills they need to succeed in writing.

At an advanced level, the second part of this course equips course participants with special skills in researching and compiling specialised documents such as technical instructions, technical reports, feasibility studies and journal articles, amongst others.

The third part of the course equips course participants with specific business application skills related to technical documentation. Participants will be taught how to package and deliver a business/technical presentation to an audience on the topic of a technical report. This is an essential business skill, and one which previous delegates have highly valued!

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Any staff member who is beginning to take responsibility for generating and conveying business information will find this course essential. It is therefore aimed primarily at middle and junior management as well as first line employees such as technicians and junior engineers. Administrative support staff may also benefit from attendance on this course as they will have a deeper understanding of the elements of report writing and their role in it.

The advanced sections of the course are particularly targeted at:

- Engineers
- Technicians
- Maintenance personnel
- Technical Managers
- Procurement personnel
- Non-technical staff involved in writing technical documents
- Department Managers

COURSE METHODOLOGY:

This seminar is interactive, allowing for active participation and skills practice during sessions. There will be several short lectures, followed by case studies, practical assignments and group discussions.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

Day 1 - Basic Skills

- Introduction to technical writing
- The need for clear and concise technical writing
- Objectives of technical writing
- Categories of readers
- Expressing versus impressing
- The development process
- Preparing to write (writing objective, identify readers, perform research)
- Organising the writing - methods of organisation (general to specific, specific to general, chronological, sequential, cause and effect, spatial, comparison)
- Document outlining – mind mapping, outline formats, outline styles
- The rough draft
- Revising the document – activate, clarify and simplify the writing, fog index principle

Day 2 - Advanced Level Skills

- Elements of technical writing
- Technical definitions
- Technical descriptions
- Technical instructions
- Formats of technical writing – formal technical report
- Establish framework
- Terms of reference – subject matter, purpose for writing, reader of the report
- Structure of a report (main sections) – introduction, main body (findings/observations/discussions), conclusion, recommendations, executive summary, other sections.
- *Case study: Developing awareness of fact and opinion*
- *Practical session: Writing a formal report with investigation of faulty models.*

Day 3 - Advanced Level Skills (continued)

- Formats of technical writing – memo report
- Basic structure
- Types of reports – (feasibility study, progress / status, test, fault)
- Other technical documentation
- Technical proposal

- Technical manual – operations and maintenance
- Journal article
- Specification writing
- Specifications and the design process
- Fundamentals of specification writing using a quality function deployment technique
- Applying the QFD method – an 8 step process
- Creating a specification template
- *Problem solving: Analysis of a specification*

Day 4 - Business Level Application

- Preparing to deliver a business/technical presentation based on a report
- Document appearance
- Transferring information from notes to a graph / flowchart / table
- Fundamentals of presentation skills
- Structuring your message
- Using visual aids effectively
- Involving the audience
- Managing question and answer sessions
- Referencing of documents
- Method of referencing
- Reference to a complete work

Day 5 - Business Level Application (continued)

- Delivery of presentations
- Personalised feedback on actual presentations conducted

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