

# Customer-Friendly Report Writing

**Being able to write a good report can be the difference between success and failure of your proposal, your project... your career.**

Writing reports at work is a chore many people dread; they need not. This course teaches practical techniques and builds not only your skills but your confidence too. Your reports need never daunt you again! This course is for everyone who needs to write reports at work: from one-pagers that summarise a routine visit - to five-pounders that finalise a major research project.

## What are the objectives?

Report Writing gives you techniques for...

- Preparing your report in a logical, step-by-step, time-saving way
- Structuring your material so it's quicker and easier to write - and quicker and easier for the reader to understand
- Developing a writing style that's clear and concise, even for technical topics

## What methods do we use?

We minimise lecturing and reinforce learning with realistic exercises, and with lots of group discussions. Thirty-odd handouts give each attendee 'the book' on report writing.

The course takes 1 or 2 days depending on the amount of practical work you'd like.

## What topics does it cover?

Here's what we usually include. We'll focus the topics on what's most important for you:

- Recognising common pitfalls and learning how to overcome them
- Using an easy six-step model to guide you in your planning
- Mind-mapping your content to decide what to put in and what to leave out
- Organising the overall and internal structure to create a logical flow
- Writing with a clear, concise and easy readable style
- Using the 'fog index' to check how easy your report is to read
- Perfecting your headings, layout, paragraphing and punctuation
- Dealing with charts, diagrams and technical information
- Adding all the trimmings that finalise a report (table of contents, appendices etc)
- Creating an executive summary for a longer report.

# Example programme

## Introduction

Welcome and what we're up to

- The attendees and course leader
- The course: objectives, structure,
- Methods

## Session 1

Getting started on the job

- Defining your purpose
- Starting your planning
- Looking out for pitfalls
- Understanding the audience
- Planning your time around deadlines

## Session 2

Organising your material

- Selecting the content
- Creating the overall structure
- Choosing the right internal structure
- Defining the headings
- Outlining the text

## Session 3

Using the 'abc' model

- Brevity; clarity; active writing

## Session 4

Practical exercises

- Using what you've learnt so far

## Session 5

More practical exercises

- Reducing fog
- 'Boiler-plating'
- Writing an executive summary

## Closing

Taking it back to work

- Bringing together key learning