

Strengthen Your Writing Skills (4 hours)

Course Overview

Professionals spend valuable resources to audit programs, analyze operations, or work to develop solutions to organizational problems. The results of this work must be communicated clearly and persuasively to the intended audiences if the work is to have the intended effect. Too often, good work is adversely affected by the writer's inability to clearly communicate results or findings. This fast-paced course is designed to give participants tools and techniques to help ensure their work has the intended result. It gives writers practical ways to apply key writing principles to any type of document (for example, reports, summaries, workpapers, proposals, and emails) to make them more readable. Working individually and in groups, participants analyze different writing samples and practice making them more effective.

CPEs: 4

Who Should Attend

Writers of all experience levels who want to improve their ability to produce documents that are clear, coherent, unified, and meet the needs of busy readers.

Objectives

Participants will be better able to

- Identify key principles of effective organization
- Write unified and coherent paragraphs
- Compose clear and concise sentences
- Edit their own writing

Course Topics

Effective Organization: Key Principles

- Provide the issue or main point before details.
- Develop the issue or main point by chunking and labeling information.
- Create a map to help readers navigate a document.

Write Unified and Coherent Paragraphs: Key Principles

- State the main point up front as a topic sentence (deductive structure).
- Develop the topic sentence by only including information that clearly supports it (unity).
- Create coherence (flow) by making the relationship between sentences

explicit.

Compose Clear and Concise Sentences: Key Principles

- Control sentence length.
- Use the sentence core effectively.
- Avoid common barriers to clarity: (1) unnecessary passive voice, (2) hidden verbs (nominalization), and (3) wordy phrases.

Use a Systematic Editing Process

- Focus on One Issue at a Time
 - Check content.
 - Edit for clarity of organization.
 - Edit for unity and coherence.
 - Edit for clarity of sentences.
 - Edit for correctness of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.