

IN PERSON · ONE DAY

## Plain Language Essentials

Many aspects of our working life are necessarily complex—but our writing doesn't need to be. Too often, documents full of complex language, jargon and convoluted sentences make reading and understanding unnecessarily difficult.

Readers appreciate information presented in plain language, which means they can understand and take action after one read. A good writer can convey a complex message simply without compromising the message itself.

This plain language writing course shows you how to simplify your writing, so all readers can understand and act on it with ease.

### Who should attend

This one-day course is for anyone who needs to translate complex, technical content into plain language, in print or online. We recommend up to 15 participants.

### You learn to

- Use a consistent process and framework to quickly generate and organize content
- Decide what information and how much detail to include
- State your main point clearly up front, and ask readers for action
- Lay out your document to make your structure scannable
- Cut excess words to energize your writing
- Use active voice and simple language to clarify your messages
- Use a positive tone to add clarity and build strong relationships
- Use readability scores to pitch your writing to the right level

## What to expect

We know that people learn best by doing, so this course gives you many opportunities to practice as you learn. You participate in large- and small-group discussions and use your own documents to assess your writing as we go. You have an opportunity to revise a document in a culminating activity, and receive feedback from your peers and guidance and coaching from the facilitator.

You receive a comprehensive manual containing practice exercises, checklists, templates, and examples. Handy tip sheets help you transfer learning to your work-based writing. You also have access to online resources for post-course use.

## How you spend your time

### Write your first draft

We guide you through the following steps to create a first draft of your document:

- Analyze your reader’s needs and clarify your purpose
- Plan your content—quickly generate and organize your ideas
- Draft quickly

### Revise your draft for clarity and style

Learn to:

- Structure your document—put your main point up front and make your document easy to scan
- Energize your writing by using active voice and a clear, concise style
- Use a positive tone to add clarity and build good relationships with your readers
- Test your writing with a readability score

### Workshop

Complete exercises in the manual to practice your new skills. As you revise one of your own documents, your facilitator is available to answer questions and provide coaching.

Share your revised document with a small group, where you give and receive feedback to take your writing to the next level.