

Writing in Plain Language

Course outline

Provided by: Performance Management Consultants – PMC Training



Reference no. 274-16

Duration 1.00 day(s) | 6:00 hours ¹

Website link <https://pmctraining.com/training/writing-in-plain-language/>

Get Your Message Across in the Shortest Time Possible

Plain language techniques make your written communications clear — and they help the audience easily understand your intended message. The Government of Canada’s communications policy states, “An institution’s duty to inform the public includes the obligation to communicate effectively....To ensure clarity and consistency of information, plain language and proper grammar must be used in all communication with the public.”

This workshop will provide you with skills needed to communicate clearly, concisely, coherently, and correctly. You will learn how to gear each piece of communication to its intended audience, always keeping the needs of the audience in mind.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Use Plain Language techniques to communicate effectively
- Understand the rationale for using Plain Language
- Write clearly and concisely
- Follow Government of Canada Plain Language guidelines

Workshop topics

Planning to Communicate

- Know your audience
- Understand why you are writing a document
- Understand how the information will be used
- Organize the information to suit the communication goal
- Present the information in the best possible way

¹ The course hours reflect teaching time that often correlate with continuing education credits (CEC) or professional development units (PDU). Please check with your profession’s governing body, as there is no universal approach.

Writing Effectively

- Organize the information
- Help the reader find the necessary information
- Address your reader directly
- Lead with intent

Designing Sentences and Paragraphs

- Keep them short and simple
- Lead with strength
- Link sentences and paragraphs
- Use the active voice
- Use positive sentences
- Check for clarity
- Follow the thread

Choosing the Right Words

- Avoiding jargon and “bureaucratese”
- Technical words and terms
- Keeping verbs as verbs
- Avoiding noun chains
- Using acronyms
- Avoiding language landmines

Presenting Your Work

- Use headings and subheadings effectively
- Help the reader navigate the text
- Use colour, font, and graphics to your advantage
- Check your text

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Who should attend this course?

Anyone who wants to improve their written communication skills and gain confidence when writing documents for a variety of audiences.