

The University of Toledo
College of Business Administration
Executive Center for Global Competitiveness

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING

Program Overview

This seminar will help attendees find out just how easy it is to unclog writer's block and start writing immediately with confidence and know-how. They will discover how to express personality and style in their writing, how to tap into their natural creativity, and how to present messages in ways that will achieve the desired positive results.

Debra Smith will share techniques for breaking big ideas into smaller, more manageable ones and for writing precisely and accurately to avoid dangerous misunderstandings or mixed messages. Participants will gain confidence in choosing the style, format, and tone that fit the tough writing assignments—proposals and reports to upper management, sales and persuasive letters, bad news letters, and status reports. The end result will be worth it—knowing how to write with more speed, clarity, and impact than ever before.

Who Should Attend

Anyone who writes letters, memos, reports, proposals, or other business-related documents. Especially helpful for managers and supervisors who need to add more impact to their writing, administrative assistants who write for their managers, salespeople who need to make proposals more persuasive, and technical professionals who need to make complex material clearer and easier to understand.

Program Objectives

In this information-packed program, participants will learn how to:

- Organize their thoughts before writing
- Break through the “blank page panic”
- Hook their reader with the opening
- Let their personality shine through
- Make their documents more appealing and “reader friendly”
- Convey credibility and professionalism
- Purge wordiness, jargon, and clichés
- Eliminate irritating redundancies
- Build goodwill and cooperation
- Write effective e-mail messages
- Deliver bad news inoffensively
- Produce mistake-free documents

Program Agenda

“Taking Stock” Before You Write

- A self-assessment for evaluating your current writing ability
- The 4 major objectives of business writing
- How to be a successful writer by using the 7C formula
- Prewriting, writing, and editing

Putting Your Ideas on Paper

- Break free from “writer’s block”
- Know your purpose
- Know your reader
- Create a fast and powerful first draft
- Freewriting—how to use your “natural voice”
- Organize your thoughts before you start
- When to use the direct approach vs. the indirect approach

Strengthening Your Style—The Most Important Elements of Clear, Crisp Writing

- Write the way you speak
- Unclutter your messages
- Spotting and eliminating amateurish writing
- “Neutralizing” your writing
- Parallelism
- Using active verbs
- How to “unsmother” your verbs and set them free
- The effective sentence in business writing
- How to keep related sentence elements together and unrelated sentence elements apart
- How to revise unclear references
- Adding punch to paragraphs
- It’s all in the tone

Writing That Means Business

- Effective e-mail messages
- Practicing the fine art of “netiquette”
- Quick tips for writing memos
- The first and last impressions of letters
- Time- and energy-saving formulas for routine writing assignments
- When the message is tough
- Writing informal business reports
- How to structure a winning business proposal
- Adding pizzazz

Proofreading and Editing—The Finishing Touches

- Where errors lurk
- Avoiding proofreading errors
- Proofread for perfection
- One last look—the Editing Checklist

About the Instructor

Debra A. Smith is a nationally respected consultant, speaker, and seminar leader. Her subject is professionalism—a composite of respect for the organization, respect for the people it serves, and respect for oneself. She develops this professionalism in her listeners, thereby enabling employees to reach their highest potential within the organization. People who attend her seminars gain new insight and direction, reinforced by effective skills that greatly enhance their performance. Every year Debra travels to over 100 cities in the United States and Canada to deliver her seminars on communication, time management, conflict resolution, and customer relations. Her seminars are skillfully designed to meet the needs of managerial, supervisory, and support personnel. She has trained over 450,000 people from organizations in the private sector and government as well as in numerous colleges and universities.

If you wish to tailor this program for onsite training at your company, please contact Carrie Herr, the Director of ECGC, by calling 419-530-2037 or via email at carrie.herr@utoledo.edu.