

Technical Report Writing



Overview

Many professionals lack confidence in their report-writing skills, and feel that their credibility suffers because their written reports are not a fair reflection of their expertise. Anyone involved in technical work will quickly discover the challenges presented when trying to communicate their ideas, information, proposals or recommendations to colleagues and clients. All too often, the impact of many hours of work can hinge on the ability to explain the results effectively to others.

Executive summaries are increasingly important: they make an initial impact, particularly on senior decision makers or management, and may be used by readers who will never need the full report. The course includes discussion of how to write an effective and engaging summary and the opportunity to put ideas into practice.

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, delegates will:

- have a clear understanding of identifying their audience and the needs of their readers e.g. decision makers, infrastructure designers, the public
- know how to design a document structure to effectively deliver their message
- appreciate how to identify the necessary content and have an appropriate layout
- be much better able to write clearly and unambiguously
- know the readily available tools to assist with report writing
- have an appreciation of how to structure data to achieve maximum impact
- know how to revise and thoroughly check the document
- be able to present the report effectively to achieve reader understanding, acceptance and buy-in
- be able to reference and quote correctly and following guidelines around copyright and reproduction

Who should attend

This programme is suitable for transportation practitioners at all levels wishing to improve their technical writing skills; it is also particularly useful for those new to technical report writing in a business and consultancy context.

Topics covered

- Planning your report
- Structuring specific technical reports eg infrastructure design, traffic management, action planning, public consultation, policy papers
- Reader-friendly formatting and layout
- Editing
- How to use software aids for better writing
- Grammar and styling
- Assessment of your writing style
- Plain language writing for a non-technical audience

Programme*

Arrival and registration

Introduction and objectives

- Technical reports - their purpose, importance and problems

Planning the production of the report

- Establish scope, purpose and objectives
- Understanding the audience/readers
- Report structure and sequence

Break

First Draft

- Going from the plan to the draft
- Determining style and audience
- Punctuation and grammar, plain language
- Use of diagrams and illustrations
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Using references and bibliography
- Gather contributions

Giving and receiving constructive feedback

- How to do an effective review
- Subsequent drafts

Editing

- Editing to make it clear, concise and correct
- Grammar and style checkers
- Executive Summary

Validation

- Getting it all signed off
- Going from the draft to the finished report.

Lunch

Pulling it all together

- Proofreading
- References and glossary
- Implementing best practice at work.

Workshop

Break

Supporting content with layout and illustrations

- Navigational aids
- Contents lists
- Crafting headings to guide your readers through the document
- When and where to use illustrations and other support material

Tools to help you

- Using templates to create a consistent layout
- Hiding the metadata in Word documents
- Handling version control of the documents

Close

* Please note that that this is a preliminary course programme and is subject to change

