UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

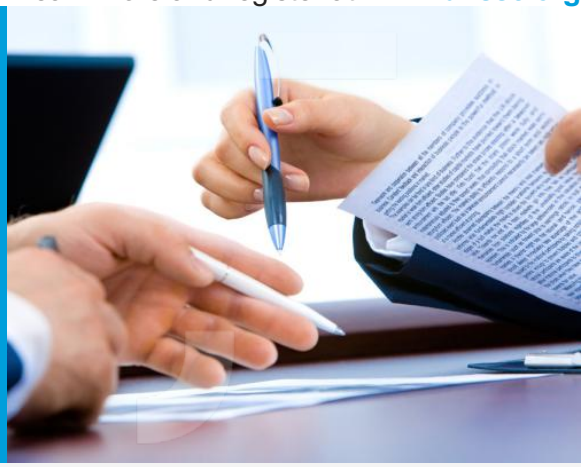
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ONLINE

04 MAR 2024 - 05 APR 2024

Effective Writing Skills (I)

Career advancement



LANGUAGE	DURATION	ENROLL BY	PRICE	LOCATION	TARGET
English	5 weeks	04 Mar 2024	1,100 USD	ONLINE	Everyone

CONTACT leadershipandmanagement@unssc.org

Make your point! Learn practical techniques to improve your ability to influence and achieve results through clear and effective writing – whether you are drafting a technical report, a strategy paper, or a professional email.

This five-week online course is designed to enhance the ability of staff to effectively draft a variety of documents through increased sensitivity to language, structure, and content.

Introduction

This five-week online course is designed to enhance the ability of staff to effectively draft a wide variety of documents through increased sensitivity to language, structure and content. Participants will be exposed to a variety of techniques for drafting documents that are adapted to the audience and have impact.

The course introduces an innovative learning approach. All participants will follow two webinars, during which effective document drafting skills applicable to any type of documents will be explained. After these initial two weeks, upon which participants will have a clearer vision of their learning priorities, they will have two options for the remaining three weeks.

They can either decide to follow a **"General writing skills"** path, mostly focusing on drafting, reviewing and managing daily communications, such as emails. Or they can decide to follow the **"Report writing skills"** path. Participants CANNOT follow both paths, only one can be selected.

The course is delivered by Brett Shapiro, professional writer and journalist with significant experience as editor for UN system organizations.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will:

- Identify the purpose, reader and context of the draft, and prepare it accordingly, by thoroughly organizing and developing ideas and concepts.
- Recognize and avoid drafting, grammar and linguistic mistakes as well as unnecessary words.
- Reproduce techniques and apply skills for drafting a reader-friendly and incisive piece, without compromising style and professionalism.
- Gain an effective methodology, and accompanying techniques, for reviewing work in order to make documents sound, structurally coherent, linguistically concise, grammatically accurate and visually appealing.
- Write more effective email texts and subject lines, as well as distinguish and use different key language and tones or levels of formality to different types of emails

Course methodology

This course is delivered entirely online. It combines live webinar sessions, led by a subject expert, with self-paced activities and interactive group discussions.

The weekly instructor-led webinars are conducted in the Zoom online platform. Participants need a computer (or mobile device), a reliable internet connection and either a headset with a microphone to connect to the audio through the computer, or a telephone. We recommend accessing audio through the computer. No special software is required; but participants must be able to access Zoom. We will send instructions for Zoom access to registered participants and recommend that you download the application and test your access in advance.

The self-paced components and discussion forum for each week of the course are designed and structured on UNKampus, UNSSC's Learning Platform.

Depending on the path you decide to follow, webinars will take place from 2:30 – 4:30 Rome Time, (8:30 am – 10:30 am New York Time) on Mondays (General writing skills path) or Tuesdays (Report writing skills path).

Approximate time commitment to fully participate in this course (completing pre-work, attending webinars, forum discussions, etc.) is 4-6 hours per week (2-4 hours preparation + 2 hours of webinar).

Course contents

Week 1 (all participants) - Effective document drafting I: process and getting started.

- Pre-writing strategies and considerations (including linguistic considerations) required to write a first draft with a clear sense of direction, message and voice.

Week 2 (all participants) – Effective document drafting II: the linguistic jungle.

- Approaches, techniques and skills to express an idea with maximum clarity.
- Emphasis on reader-friendliness, but not at the expense of professionalism.
- Additional linguistic issues (e.g., nominalizations, passive voice) will be addressed.

Week 3:

General writing skills path – Composition of emails.

- Formulating the appropriate subject line, opening and closing;
- Internal versus external communication;
- Determining the appropriate tone/degree of formality;
- The human touch above all.

Report writing skills path – Dense, denser, densest.

- Exploring most common linguistic constructions and pitfalls that make a reader or longer documents shut down.

Week 4:

General writing skills path – Getting it right.

- How to best organize complex information in an email;
- Draft emails that contain negative messages;
- Diplomacy;
- "Me" versus "you" correspondence.

Report writing skills path – Beyond text: structure, format and graphics.

- Importance of a reader-friendly structure and format, and the underuse, use – and abuse – of acronyms, charts, graphs, tables, text boxes and photographs.

Week 5:

General writing skills path – Reviewing your work and basic email etiquette.

- Quality assurance techniques to ensure structural coherence, linguistic clarity, and compelling messages.

Report writing skills path – Revising and refining your work.

- Methodologies to ensure structural integrity and attractiveness, linguistic clarity, compelling messages and proofreading techniques.

Target audience

All UN personnel (Professional and General Service staff) at headquarters and field locations.

Cost of participation

The course fee of $1,100 covers full participation in the online course.