

THE PROFESSIONAL WRITING COURSE

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The Professional Writing Course is a two-hour presentation that offers all leaders and managers practical ways to improve official writing. It is available to bases or organizations that pay TDY and transportation costs for two instructors.

COURSE PEDIGREE

This course was formerly known as “Executive Writing” and was tailored to mid-level and senior managers—those we assumed did most of an organization’s writing. Now, with email, communication has transformed in such a way that all members of all organizations can benefit from our instruction. Thus, the name has changed to “Professional Writing”, but the content has remained largely constant. Ours has been a top-rated program since its inception in the early 1970s at Squadron Officer School, Army and Air Force Exchange Services, and everywhere else participants have rated it against other presentations. Audiences praise the course’s practical advice, tailored approach, and lively instruction. Most of the participating instructors are majors or lieutenant colonels with PhDs, and all have taught English for years.

UNIQUE FEATURES

We teach with technology:

Using a tablet PC that allows us to write directly onto the laptop, the instructors edit examples of letters and emails using suggestions from audience members. This may sound dull, but just read on.

We added email:

Because email has absolutely revolutionized the way large organizations like the Air Force do business and communicate, every member at every level is now expected to write effectively. All ranks use email to communicate all types of information. Thus, this course is for all writers. Considering the importance that email plays in our daily lives, this course offers detailed advice on how to combat the sometimes crippling effect of email writing. The course isn’t a grammar and punctuation refresher; instead, it offers detailed advice on how to make writing organized, informal, and concise. You won’t find artificial exercises in the course, either. Our material consists of official correspondence, directives, and reports. And no, we don’t do OPR writing.

COMMANDER'S ROLE

The course brings significant improvement when commanders give it convincing support. We ask that your commander press for attendance, meet the instructors, and introduce one presentation. If he or she can attend the course, all the better.

YOUR COSTS

A requesting unit pays the TDY costs; airline fare, lodging, per diem, and (if applicable) a rental car for two officers. If at all possible, we'll schedule a second unit on your trip your trip to save you money. You print the course pamphlet.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

This course is directed to all officers, civilians, and enlisted: everyone. Everyone writes every day; so no one is excluded from the course. We ask assurances that senior staff members and their executive officers will attend, for the course is likely to increase frustration more than communication without the support of these trend setters. We should note, however, that the instructors' method of editing staff work is particularly suited to those who review the writing of others.

AUDIENCE SIZE

We'll give the course to as many people as your conference room or theater will hold. We expect a minimum between 25 and 50.

RETURN VISITS

We recommend annual visits to give booster shots. We'll train your new people and any others who may have missed the course or who need a refresher session.

PROJECT OFFICER

A phone call or even an email will put your unit on the course schedule. If you have a date in mind, call as soon as possible because our calendar fills up four to twelve month's in advance. If you decide to schedule a Professional Writing program visit, we'll send you a Project Officer's Handbook and the other materials you need to coordinate the event.