

*TheCapitol.Net's Executive Conference:*  
**Critical Thinking and Writing: How to Compose Clear and Effective  
Reports, Letters and Memos**

*Presented for (federal agency)  
(Agenda from a custom program designed for a federal agency in 2001. To have a program tailored for  
your organization, contact us.)*

Landover, MD

*Instructor: Experienced writer/editor*

**8:30** Welcome and Introduction

**8:45** The 5-Step Writing Process

**9:30** Exercise: Communicating with Clear English

- Avoid pompous words
- Recognize clichés
- Focus on the real subject and verb
- Unlearn bad habits

**10:00** Break

**10:15** Punctuation Primer: The Basics of Punctuation and Grammar

**10:45** Writing with Style

- (Client agency)'s style and formats (letters, memos, etc.)
- U.S. Government Correspondence Manual

**11:15** Proofreading for Accuracy

- Breaking writing and correspondence into different elements
- Techniques for efficient proofreading

**11:45** Exercise: Using the Correct Word

- Dictionaries and the thesaurus
- Words that look and sound alike
- Commonly misunderstood words

**12:00** Lunch break (on own)

**12:45** Writing Letters and Memos

- The fundamentals of clear concise professional letters
- Sentences and paragraphs
- Examples of good and bad writing
- Examples of (client agency) letters or congressional correspondence

**2:15** Break

**2:30** Writing a Summary

**3:30** Individual Exercise and Writing Assignment

**4:00** Seminar concludes

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