



# Critical Thinking and Writing

## How to Compose Clear and Effective Reports, Letters and Memos

*Intensive 2-day course designed for those who write on behalf of their agency or organization.*

During this intensive 2-day course, attendees review and improve their use of the three dimensions of professional writing: organization, format and style.

### Sample Agenda

#### Day One: The Fundamentals

- 8:30** Welcome and Introduction
- 8:45** The 5-Step Writing Process
- 9:30** Exercise: Communicating with Clear English
  - Avoid pompous words and 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
  - Your organization's style and formats
  - U.S. Government Correspondence Manual
- 11:15** Proofreading for Accuracy
  - Breaking writing and correspondence into its 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
- 12:45** Writing Letters and Memos
  - The fundamentals of clear concise professional letters
  - Sentences and paragraphs
  - Examples of good and bad writing
  - Examples of agency/organization letters

#### (Day One continued)

- 2:15** Break
- 2:30** Writing a Summary
- 3:30** Individual Exercise and Writing Assignment
- 4:00** Day One concludes

#### Day Two: Letters, Memos, Reports and Editing

- 8:30** Welcome and turn in assignments
- 8:45** Review Assignment Solutions
  - Review and discussion of specific examples
- 10:00** Break
- 10:15** Writing Organization Correspondence/Writing Congressional Correspondence
  - Organization or agency representatives discuss specific examples, issues of particular concern, and internal approval and editing cycles
- 12:00** Lunch
- 1:00** Writing Memos and Reports
  - How to plan, structure and write longer documents
- 2:15** Break
- 2:30** The Editing Cycle
  - Ending endless editing
  - Standardizing formats and terms
- 3:00** Maintaining Effective Writing Skills
  - Using writing resources
  - How to keep writing skills sharp
- 4:00** Day Two/Program Concludes

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**Sample Agendas:** See how others have used our training. Selected sample agendas from actual programs designed for previous clients are on our web site at [www.SampleAgendas.com](http://www.SampleAgendas.com)

*Your organization's style guide and one-on-one coaching can be incorporated into the course.*

**When:** To be most effective, this course requires 2 days. It can be customized as a 1-day presentation with limited exercises or limited feedback from the instructor.

**Questions:** For more information and to get a custom program quote and date availability, call 202-678-1600.

