John Sturtevant
Communication Skills Training™
Practical techniques for clear & persuasive communication.

Persuasive Business Writing

A one-day hands-on workshop that will give your colleagues the confidence and skills to think clearly & write persuasively.

Training Strategy

Information is plentiful throughout your organization. But how your staff communicates that information is critical. Throughout the workday, business people must continually turn information into knowledge to help their managers, colleagues, and clients understand often complex ideas and make educated decisions.

Persuasive Business Writing is a hands-on one-day session that is ideal for anyone who wants to learn practical ways to think clearly, organize their ideas, and structure a logical and persuasive document.

Participants will learn and practice a clear and logical planning structure, collaborate on problem-solving exercises, write and revise assignments, and reinforce their skills through peer critiques.

Participants will also learn and practice techniques for persuasive writing. Most often in business, people write to convince others to do something – change a process, take an action, or approve a decision. Through case studies, hands-on exercises, and guided assignments, participants will learn to think analytically and structure an effective argument.

Persuasive Business Writing combines business examples, discussions, exercises, and assignments to give participants practical, relevant skills they will use immediately to write clearly and persuasively.

Agenda

Clear writing is clear thinking made visible.

The key to clear writing is to lose stale, ineffective writing habits and embrace an approach that focuses on analytical thinking, and a logical, persuasive structure.

Analytical Thinking

The most common mistake most people make is to begin writing without planning. In many organizations, business goals focus on time – getting things done quickly – rather than getting things done effectively. Unfortunately, this approach nearly always leads to poor communication and unproductive relationships between managers, colleagues, clients, and the public.

Participants will learn to examine their messages and topics, analyze options, choose a reader-focused strategy, organize their ideas, and communicate with purpose.

Participants will gain the confidence and skills they need to:

- Eliminate tedious writing habits they've learned since childhood
- Apply an approach to writing that includes outlines and logical structure
- Use words that precisely communicate the writer's meaning and purpose
- Develop greater confidence and significantly increase their productivity
- Discover how to ask insightful questions that uncover their reader's perceptions
- Define a clear, logical structure they can use in all their writing
- Tap into their own experiences and perspectives to develop a unique voice
- Identify and correct common writing errors through editing and revision

Analysis exercises

Participants will complete a series of exercises designed to help them examine a situation thoroughly, and ask insightful questions. Participants will use these planning techniques:

- Plan, write, revise, edit – A 4-step process to help participants think clearly, organize their ideas, focus on their objectives, and take less time writing.
- Analytical questions – 29 questions to help writers look beyond the obvious
- Brainstorming – A structured way to generate ideas and form logical connections
- Outlining – A planning tool that helps writers organize their ideas and structure a logical document

Writing Mechanics

Participants will learn how to craft clear sentences, structure logical paragraphs, and eliminate embarrassing and costly writing mistakes.

Sentences & Paragraphs
The Sentence - People use them every day, but don't know what they are
The Paragraph - The document's rhythm section
Active Voice – How to focus the reader on who is doing what

Principles of Revision & Editing
Style - How to set the right tone for their audience and purpose
Clarity - What's clear for the writer is often confusing for the reader
Coherence – Simple ways to assess their document's logic

Revision exercises
Through hands-on exercises, participants will examine good and bad examples of style, structure, word choice, and clarity, and practice transforming confusing writing into clear writing.

Persuasive Writing

Participants will learn the essential skills of persuasive writing. These skills will help them plan, structure, and write documents with focused objectives that achieve clearly-defined results.

Participants will learn to:

- Identify key issues and problems to be resolved
- Develop a logical and persuasive argument
- Test their logic using a syllogism
- Create a seven-step proof line of their argument structure
- Consider and address opposing points of view

Argument structure

Participants will learn how to structure an argument, introduce facts, support claims, and make clear recommendations – all essential to persuasive business writing. Using the ideas they generated in their brainstorming exercise, each participant will craft a persuasive argument outline.

Assignment

Participants will determine his or her purpose, audience, and expected outcome, and write a persuasive document with a logical structure and a clear recommendation.

Critiques

We'll read the assignments and discuss how each participant approached the planning and writing. Participants reinforce their skills and learn from each other through these peer critiques.

About John Sturtevant

John has taught thousands of business people around the world how to think clearly and communicate persuasively.

He was a successful business writer for twenty years. He also taught core-curriculum writing courses at Harvard Business School and was Professor of Business Communications at The European School of Economics.

John earned the All-Star Speaker honor from the International Association of Business Communicators. He presents onsite communication skills training at government agencies and companies throughout the world.

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John Sturtevant taught people in these organizations how to write clearly and persuasively.

Acadian Asset Management
AEGON Insurance Group
Agility Logistics
Air Liquide
Alaska Society of Professional Engineers
Alcatel-Lucent
Alert Logic
Allstate
AmBank Group Malaysia
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
American Bureau of Shipping
Anadarko Petroleum
Anheuser-Busch
APQC – Research & Benchmarking
Aramco Services Company
Asia Business Forum
Bethyl Labs
BHP Billiton
Bank Of The West
Blue Cross Blue Shield
Boston Medical Center
BP America
British Columbia Hydro & Power Authority
British Columbia Transmission Corporation
Calpine Corporation
CenterPoint Energy
Cerulli Associates Boston/Singapore
Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, Zambia
Chevron
Citizens Bank
City of Denver, Colorado
City of Los Banos, California
Civil Service College Singapore
Clemson University Center for Corporate Learning
Clipsal Manufacturing, Huizhou China
Colorado Oil & Gas Association
Coors Distributing Company
Damon S. Williams Environmental Engineering
Devon Energy Corporation
Elan Biotechnology
Energy Market Authority Singapore
Enervest
Enbridge
Enterprise Products
ESM Consulting Engineers
Ethicon Endo-Surgery
Exelon Nuclear
Explorer Pipeline
ExxonMobil US/Argentina
Far East Organization, Singapore
Fannie Mae
Federal Bureau of Investigation
First Commonwealth Bank
FKP Architects
Fluor Corporation
FMC Technologies
Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P.
General Electric
General Mills
GDF Suez
Global Business Exchange, Singapore
Government of Singapore Investment Corporation
Habitat For Humanity
Hanover Insurance Group
Harris County Public Infrastructure Dept.
Hawaii Visitor and Convention Bureau
Healthcare Information & Management Systems Society
HD Vest Financial Services
Hongkong & Shanghai Hotels
Hong Kong Securities & Futures Commission
Houston Airport Systems
Humana
Infocomm Development Authority Of Singapore
International Power, North America
Ipsos
Johnson Space Center
Kaiser Permanente
Kohl's Department Stores
KPMG Singapore
LaSalle Investment Management, Singapore
Lockheed Martin
MACTEC Engineering
Maine Association of Medical Staff Services
Marathon Oil Company
Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
Massachusetts Hospital Association
MassHousing
MassPort
Mayo Regional Hospital
MD Anderson Medical Center
Medtronic R&D Shanghai
NASA
National Investor Relations Institute
National Fire Protection Association
Noble Energy
Oasis Petroleum
Pacific Gas & Electric
Playtex Products Research
Pop Labs
Portland General Electric
Potlatch Corporation
Pricewaterhouse Coopers
Qualcomm
RBS Citizens Financial Group
Restoration Cleaners
Rice University
Safeco Insurance
Schipul - The Web Marketing Company
Schneider Electric Global Supply Chain
Scott & White Memorial Hospital
Sendero Wealth Management
Shell Exploration & Production Company
Siemens
Silver Eagle Distributors
Singapore Institute of Technology
Singapore Management University
Singapore Ministry of Defense
Singapore Ministry of the Environment
Social Security Administration
Society for Technical Communication
Society of Women Engineers
Sound Transit
Spectra Energy
Sunoco
Stage Stores
Standard Chartered Bank, Singapore
State Farm Insurance
State Street Global Advisors
Stroud Consulting
SunGard Energy Solutions
Swift Energy
Synernet
Texas Credit Union League
Texas Department of Agriculture
Texas Society of Medical Staff Services
Texas Municipal League
Total Petrochemical
TPC Group
Tranter
Trinity Wall Street
Tri-State Generation & Transmission Assoc.
Tundra Semiconductor
UHY Advisors
University of Houston
University of Texas Austin
USDA Forest Service
U.S. Army Communications and Electronics Command
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Marine Corps Systems Command
Walt Disney Company
Weatherford International Oil Field Services
Whirlpool Corporation
Williams Helde
Wood Group PSN
Wood Group GTS
World Fuel Services
Yuhuang Chemical, Inc.