

Fat-Free Writing: Business Writing for the Information Age (1st Edition)

Course Specifications

Course Number: CCT-014_rev4.0

Course Length: Self-study or classroom training

Course Description

The 50-Minute Manager Series was designed to cover critical business and professional development topics in the shortest time possible. Our easy-to-read, easy-to-understand format can be used for self-study or classroom training, or even office training. With a wealth of hands-on exercises, the 50-Minute books keep you engaged and help you retain critical skills.

The activities and techniques outlined in this book will teach you to communicate clearly, correctly, and concisely; format documents for maximum impact; use shirtsleeve English to get your point across; tailor your communication to different learning styles; and simplify your messages to ensure they will get read. Paring your writing down to a distinct and concise message makes a huge difference in what your reader pays attention to and retains. Today's limited time, technological advances, and increased pace of communication means that every written word counts. You will learn critical skills for delivering messages with impact, such as constructing eye-catching subject lines and using parallel construction.

Course Objective: The learning objectives for Fat-Free Writing are listed below. They have been developed to guide you, the reader, to the core issues covered in this book.

The Objectives of this book are:

- To introduce the reader to the principles of Shirtsleeve English
- To empower the reader's writing by using verbs
- To update the reader's style by keeping things short and simple
- To deploy information on the page for the reader's eye

Course Content

Introduction

- Four Communication Styles
- Three Learning Styles
- Assessing Your Communication Style
- A Matter of Style

Part 1: Use Shirtsleeve English

- Shirtsleeve Strategies
- Use Short, Familiar Words
- Get Rid of Word Weeds
- Eliminate Time-Wasters
- Avoid Stuffiness and Cliches
- Be Positive in Tone
- Be Specific and Concrete
- Don't Jargonize
- Make Items Parallel
- Keep Terms Consistent

Part 2: Use Power Language

- Verbs Are Power Words
- Use Active Voice
- Go for the Verb!
- Avoid Wimp-Speak

Part 3: K.I.S.S. Keep It Short & Simple!

- It Is Simply Faster
- Write Shorter Sentences
- Create Must-Read Reference Lines
- Get Right to the Point
- Close with a Bang!
- Write Shorter Paragraphs
- Use Transitions

Part 4: Format for Your Reader's Eye

- Design Your Page Visually
- Use Headings and Labels
- Make Memos and Letters Scannable
- Make Email Effective

Appendix

- Punctuation Update
- Proofreading Tips
- Numbers in Writing
- Test Your Word Usage
- Author's Suggested Responses to Exercises
- Recommended Reading