



TriMetrix®HD Written Communication

Written Communication

Writes clearly, succinctly and understandably.

Why is this skill important?

Many people are intimidated by writing. Even so, there are times when writing is the best way to communicate and, oftentimes, the only way to get your message across.

Varying levels of writing skills are required for different jobs. The ability to convey ideas is important. The extent to which proper grammar and form are important depends on both the job and the method of communication.

Thankfully, today's technology makes memo, letter and proposal writing much easier by providing reliable tools that check and even correct misspelled words and incorrect grammar usage. Unfortunately, these tools are not fail proof and will require your support, making your knowledge in this area important.

People with good Written Communication skills are able to make any information, concept or issue understandable and clear. They are able to organize information in a logical manner, allowing the reader to come to a natural conclusion.

Effective Written Communication takes time and skill as only a small portion of the communication is contained in the words themselves. Poorly written messages create confusion or fail to achieve their intended purpose.

What are skills associated with Written Communication?

Someone who has mastered skills associated with Written Communication:

- Writes in ways that make abstract concepts, issues and information clear and understandable.
- Utilizes a wide range of appropriate writing techniques and methods.
- Succinctly presents objective or subjective viewpoints and arguments.
- Achieves communication objectives by organizing information in logical sequences that lead readers to natural conclusions.
- Determines what information needs to be communicated.
- Skillfully utilizes written language to convey key messages and meaning.
- Effectively involves readers in the material.
- Adjusts writing style to specific audience needs.

How do you develop your own skills in Written Communication?

- Use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. Avoid the use of slang.
- Express ideas so that the reader can understand.
- Organize communication in a logical manner.
- Adjust the style, format and content of communication to the level of the reader.
- Present your data accurately to support conclusions and recommendations.
- Send communication to the appropriate parties.
- Ask for help from others in reviewing important documents.
- Be clear about your goal and communicate it.
- Choose an appropriate communication method. Know when an e-mail will be effective or when a composed letter will be more appropriate.
- Try not to use abbreviations unless they are appropriately defined.
- Take great care to always spell the names of people and companies correctly.
- Keep sentences short.
- There are many sources available to assist with proper writing style. There are also easy-to-read, easy-to-understand guides to writing. Don't hesitate to use them!
- Use both grammar and spell check on your computer. Pay close attention to every word highlighted.

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Activities

Activity 1: Define the Message

Business writers sometimes struggle to figure out what they are going to say and how they're going to say it. This activity will help you define the message you want to convey. Answer these questions to help you define your message.

1. What is the situation, problem or issue that is prompting you to write?
2. Why are you writing this document?
3. Who is going to read it?
4. What to your readers need to know?
5. What action do you want your readers to take?

Activity 2: Gain Insight

Read over a document you wrote within the past six months. Imagine that you had just 30 seconds to explain the key message to a colleague waiting on the phone.

Come up with the words you would use and say them out loud. See if you get to the point faster in your imaginary conversation than you did in your document.

Re-write the original document utilizing your new insight.

Most of what we write at work isn't thrilling, but using flowery words to enliven business text is not appropriate. In the business world, you write more often about a situation than about a tangible object so it's difficult to be descriptive. You can, however, make text come alive with compelling language that engages the reader.

To familiarize yourself with these words and how they are used, read newspaper and magazine articles. Use a highlighter to identify compelling words.

Example: "The new five-year plan will propel our firm to new heights."

