

C O N T E N T A L I V E

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Technical Writing and Presentation Skills for Engineers

2-Day Workshop on Communication Skills for Engineering Professionals

Synopsis

If you open the “competency toolkit” of highly successful engineers, what will you find inside? Besides deep technical knowledge and skills, near the top you will find “communication skills”, one of the top three most desired skills in engineering professionals.

Think about it: What are engineers doing most of the time? Reading or writing documents (reports, specifications, procedures, proposals, e-mails, etc.) or making presentations on critical issues. Operating in a networked environment, engineers spend a significant proportion of time communicating in writing or verbally.

Just as machines need good lubrication to operate smoothly, technical professionals need sound communication skills to perform well. Strong communication skills lead to:

- Higher productivity
- Superior quality of work
- Career growth

At organisational level, an invisible chain of links exists between the productivity, quality, and corporate image of a company—and the communications skills of employees.

Technical Writing and Presentation Skills for Engineers is a 2-day workshop to grind, hone and refine the writing and presentation skills of hard-core engineers.

Key learning objectives

By participating in this workshop, you should be able to:

- express yourself in writing and verbally with more confidence.
- write more fluently.
- write more clearly, concisely and correctly.
- apply the basic rules of grammar with greater clarity.
- avoid common language errors.
- make impressive PowerPoint presentations.

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Target audience

- Engineers, managers and supervisors who spend significant proportion of their time communicating either in writing or verbally.
- Class size: 15-20 participants

Duration

- 2-day workshop

Workshop outline

Day 1: Powerful written communications

Module 1: Never start without asking “why?”

- Why strong writing skills are key to your performance and career growth?
- Most common problems in written documents
- Qualities of well-written technical documents
[written exercises, discussion]

Module 2: Three steps to greater momentum in writing

- Three-step writing process
- Know your readers and empathise
- Know your purpose
- Priming and outlining
- Writing and revising
- Building blocks of writing: Paragraphs
[written exercises, case studies]

Module 3: Best practices for powerful written communications

- Use simple, short and familiar words
- Write short sentences
- Minimise jargon and use abbreviations with care
- Use active voice
- Be specific and concrete
- Organise logically
[written exercises]

Module 4: Crack the grammar code

- Don't be tense about tenses
- Weed out common errors
- Be clear about confusing words (shall vs. will, which vs. that, lay vs. lie, etc.)
[written exercises]

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Day 2: Impressive presentations

Module 5: Get the blueprint right

- Typical presentations: Boring, confusing, purposeless
- Impressive presentations: Engaging, focused, purposeful
- Start with the end: Slight-edge technique
- Vital parameters: Audience, subject, purpose, time, outline
[Exercise: Plan your presentation]

Module 6: Prepare stunning slides

- Research and power of reserve power
- Organise your material (diamond, PREP, magic of a story)
- Draft slides
- Iterative reviewing and seeking inputs from colleagues
- Do's and don'ts for producing impressive slides
[Exercise: Prepare your slides]

Module 7: Practice, practice, practice

- Opening & closing
- Authenticity and impact
- Power of preparation
- Art of remembering
- Read aloud exercise
[Exercise: Practice delivery]

Module 8: Wow with your presentation

- Connecting with audience
- Body language
- Room layout
- Self-feedback and evaluation
[Exercise: Deliver your presentation]

Training materials

1. A training manual providing description of key principles, examples, case studies, tips and exercises.
2. Hand-outs (PDF) of PowerPoint slides.
3. Certificate of Attendance

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Trainer's profile

Atul Mathur is a technical writer with over 100 writing projects to his credit and more than 10 years of experience in technical writing.

He has conceptualized, written and edited wide variety of technical documents, which include specifications, technical reports, test protocols and procedures. His articles have been published in technical journals and newspapers.

As an engineer, he has also been involved in the design, construction and commissioning of several engineering projects.

He is also a certified trainer and has conducted more than 50 public workshops/corporate training programmes/teaching sessions on a wide range of subjects, covering technical knowledge, communication skills and personal effectiveness. He has been a guest faculty at the BCA Academy, the James Cook University and the SIM University at Singapore.

Atul holds a master's degree in engineering from IIT Kanpur, India, and an Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA) from Singapore.

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