

# Technical Writing Skills (TWS)

## 2-day workshop



If you need to produce user guides, proposals, specifications or any form of online documentation then you'll be using language to communicate with your reader. This workshop covers the essential techniques necessary to produce clear and unambiguous written communications.

Using a structured process you'll start by learning how to plan your objectives, identify your audience, structure your document and select a writing style suited to your readers. Then it's time to get started - learn how to construct effective sentences and paragraphs - how to avoid bad prose - how to choose words that will connect with the reader.

Learn how editing, reviewing and testing are part of the normal writing process rather than tasks to be approached with dread. Using both individual and group exercises, you'll have ample opportunity to practise your writing skills. You'll also critique and re-write some of the "less than ideal" documents put out by commercial and government organisations!

*TWS is learn by doing..... practical, hands-on, intensive.....and fun!!*

### WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Technical writers, business analysts and business people responsible for producing user guides, proposals, reports, specifications and online documentation.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Participants will learn how to produce clear, concise documents. They will be confident in the planning of an effective document that will meet the reader's needs. They will gain the ability to constructively edit new and existing documentation.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the course delegates will be able to:

- Describe the essential elements of useable documentation
- Plan a document structure to meet your requirements
- Select an appropriate writing style
- Write, edit and review your work
- Test and publish documents

### WHAT METHODS DO WE USE?

- Presentations supported by visual aids
- Class examples
- Syndicate case study work
- Individual work
- Comprehensive delegate manual

### WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID...

"The course delivered a base knowledge of a subject we all know about, but know little about"  
**Training Manager, RAAF Williams**

"The course has given me knowledge of good methods which will help me plan, review and test any document that I write. I will see written material in a new light"  
**Telstra**

"Very informative without being too formal. Presented in a friendly manner that invoked all participants to contribute"  
**Senior Technical Analyst, Tabcorp**

"The real value is in being able to focus 100% on course content without outside interruptions"  
**Project Coordinator, Brisbane City Council**

"When can you come back and teach my manager and supervisor?"  
**University of Western Sydney**



209/620 St Kilda Road  
Melbourne, VIC 3004  
Australia  
ACN 007 219 589

Tel: (03) 9533 2300  
Fax: (03) 9533 2400  
Email: [training@irm.com.au](mailto:training@irm.com.au)  
Web: [www.irm.com.au](http://www.irm.com.au)



## WORKSHOP TOPICS

### ***Problems and opportunities with documentation***

Why we don't read reports and manuals - common problems with writing. What are the consequences of poor documentation? Who benefits from effective documentation? Whose responsibility is it anyway?

### ***Preparing the document plan***

Who will be involved? Scheduling the project. Defining the need - who is the audience? Producing "blueprints" and outlines.

### ***Meeting the needs of your audience***

Five levels of reader, each with different needs and expectations. Reader's, not writer's, orientation - what is the difference and why is it important? Making information accessible quickly. Selecting the appropriate media.

### ***Producing the document***

Format and layout. Structure - procedural, step by step, task oriented. Tradeoffs - abbreviation versus understanding. Accessibility - contents, index, glossaries, summaries.

### **Course Materials:**

*Participants receive a comprehensive manual which contains copies of the course slides and can be used as an ongoing reference.*

### ***Writing the draft***

Writer's block - two distinct causes and how to overcome them. Writing for your audience. Choosing an appropriate writing style. Passive and active voice. Conversational and narrative styles. Procedure writing - the manuscript technique. Jargon - use and abuse. Reader focused writing techniques - using examples, task orientation.

### ***Editing the document***

Six distinct editing tasks: language, style, format, context, integrity, production. Do the words make sense? The FOG index and how to measure it.

### ***Testing and publishing your document***

Technical, management and audience reviews. Field testing the document for understanding. Selecting appropriate distribution methods. Production and maintenance. Maintaining a distribution list. Keeping documentation up-to-date.

### ***Specific skills***

Business letters and proposals. Persuasive and motivational writing. Writing for the online reader.

## **What's different about Instructor-led training?**

"Learn by doing" has long been recognised as the most effective way of teaching skills and techniques. The more complex the skills, the more effective instructor-led workshops become compared to self-paced, self-learning or lecture style teaching.

All IRM courses are practical workshops, led by experienced instructors. Each workshop is oriented around a fully worked case study or practical exercise where course delegates work in teams and individually to re-enforce the skills being taught.

One thing we guarantee – these are “roll your sleeves up” courses with an emphasis on doing, participation, interaction—and learning. Participants have the opportunity to develop contacts from other organisations and to discuss and share common issues, problems and solutions.

### **For course dates and bookings:**

**Visit: [www.irm.com.au](http://www.irm.com.au) Phone: 03 9533 2300 Email: [training@irm.com.au](mailto:training@irm.com.au)**