



## Business Writing Foundation Skills

Learn techniques for stylistic clarity that results in grammatically correct, concise and flawlessly professional documents.

**Course duration: 12 hours**

### COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS

Learn about the four most common grammatical errors and how to check for and correct them.

Estimated duration: 45 minutes

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS (10 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: PRONOUN REFERENCE AGREEMENT (10 MINUTES)**

- Define pronoun reference agreement problem.
- Identify when pronoun reference agreement problems exist in text.
- Practise correcting faulty pronoun reference agreement problems.

**LESSON 2: SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT (10 MINUTES)**

- Define subject verb agreement problem.
- Identify when subject verb agreement problems exist in text.
- Practise correcting faulty subject verb agreement problems.

**LESSON 3: VAGUE WORD AND PRONOUN REFERENCE (10 MINUTES)**

- Define vague word and pronoun reference problem.
- Identify vague word and pronoun problems in text.
- Practise correcting vague word and pronoun reference problems.

**LESSON 4: DANGLING AND MISPLACED MODIFIERS (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the difference between dangling and misplaced modifiers.
- Identify dangling and misplaced modifiers in text.
- Practise correcting dangling and misplaced modifiers.

**ASSESSMENT: COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS (10 MINUTES)**

### WORD CHOICES AND SPELLING

Learn to use correct word choices in commonly abused, misused, confused and misspelled words.

Estimated duration: 1 hour and 15 minutes

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: WORD CHOICES AND SPELLING (15 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: WORD CHOICES (20 MINUTES)**

- Identify the commonly abused, misused and confused words when writing business documents.
- Practise identifying and correcting faulty word choices and spelling mistakes.

**LESSON 2: SEXIST AND POLITICALLY INCORRECT WORDS (10 MINUTES)**

- Define sexist language and understand why you need to avoid it when writing business documents.
- Identify the main sexist language faults and correct them.
- Learn the preferred wording for salutations and complimentary closes.

**LESSON 3: SPELLING (15 MINUTES)**

- Identify the most common spelling, typing and word use mistakes when writing.
- Identify and correct faulty spelling.

**ASSESSMENT: WORD CHOICES AND SPELLING (15 MINUTES)**

# PUNCTUATION AND CASE

Learn how to edit documents according to the rules for punctuating words, sentences, paragraphs and shortened forms. Also learn how to use case correctly and consistently.

Estimated duration: 2 hours

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: PUNCTUATION AND CASE (10 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: APOSTROPHES (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct use of apostrophes.
- Identify and correct faulty apostrophe use.

**LESSON 2: COMMAS (20 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct use of commas.
- Identify and correct faulty comma use.

**LESSON 3: COMMON PUNCTUATION MARKS (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct use of periods/full stops, semicolons, colons, hyphens, dashes and slashes.
- Identify and correct faulty use of these punctuation marks in text.

**LESSON 4: QUESTION AND EXCLAMATION MARKS (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct use of question marks and exclamation marks.
- Identify and correct faulty use of these punctuation marks in text.

**LESSON 5: SALUTATIONS AND COMPLIMENTARY CLOSES (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct punctuation and case in names, salutations and complimentary closes.
- Identify and correct faulty punctuation and case usage.

**LESSON 6: SHORTENED FORMS (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct punctuation and case in different types of shortened forms.
- Identify and correct faulty punctuation and case usage in shortened forms.

**LESSON 7: ADDRESSES (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct punctuation and case in addresses.
- Identify and correct faulty punctuation and case usage in addresses.

**LESSON 8: BRACKETS (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct punctuation and case when using brackets.
- Identify and correct faulty punctuation and case usage.

**LESSON 9: QUOTATION MARKS (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct punctuation and case when using quotation marks.
- Identify and correct faulty punctuation and case usage.

**LESSON 10: CASE (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct use of case in common nouns, proper nouns and titles.
- Identify and correct faulty case usage

**ASSESSMENT: PUNCTUATION AND CASE (10 MINUTES)**

# SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

Learn how to edit to ensure good sentence construction and parallel construct in text. Also learn how to check for correct use of the active voice. Practise editing documents to ensure an overall consistent approach.

Estimated duration: 1 hour and 45 minutes

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION (15 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION (25 MINUTES)**

- Learn what the read aloud test (RAT) is and how to use it effectively.
- Understand the importance of good sentence construction in business writing.
- Define the three elements of a complete sentence (or independent clause).
- Learn the three basic sentence construction faults.
- Identify and repair the three sentence construction faults.

**LESSON 2: PARALLEL CONSTRUCT (20 MINUTES)**

- Learn what parallel construct means.
- Understand why using correct parallel construct is important.
- Identify and main grammar forms used in parallel construct.
- Learn the five main parallel construct situations.
- Identify faulty parallel construct using a set of guidelines.
- Learn how to repair faulty parallel construct.

**LESSON 3: ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn what active and passive voice means.
- Understand why the preference in business correspondence is the active voice.
- Learn the situations where it is more appropriate to use the passive voice.
- Learn to identify the active and passive voice.
- Practise identifying active and passive voice and their appropriate use.

**LESSON 4: TENSE (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn about the three basic tenses.
- Understand the tense consistency guidelines.
- Identify and correct tense consistency problems.

**LESSON 5: FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PERSON WRITING (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn what is meant by person or point of view in business writing, and understand the guidelines for using person or point of view.
- Identify first person writing and its appropriate use.
- Identify second person writing (or the you orientation) and its appropriate use.
- Identify third person writing and its appropriate use.

**ASSESSMENT: SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION (15 MINUTES)**

# LISTS AND BULLET POINTS

Learn the rules for wording, punctuating and using case in bulleted, numbered or general lists.

Estimated duration: 1 hour and 30 minutes

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: LISTS AND BULLET POINTS (10 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: LEADER SENTENCES AND LEADER PHRASES (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the difference between leader sentences and phrases.
- Learn when to use leader sentences and leader phrases.
- Identify leader sentences and phrases.
- Identify the appropriate use of leader sentences and phrases.
- Learn how to fix inappropriate use of leader sentences and phrases.

- LESSON 2: PARALLEL CONSTRUCT IN LIST ITEMS (30 MINUTES)**
- Learn what parallel construct means.
  - Understand why using correct parallel construct in lists is important.
  - Identify the main grammar forms used in parallel construct.
  - Use the tips to ensuring correct parallel construct.
  - Learn how to use parallel patterns to structure text.
  - Identify incorrect use of parallel construct and fix the errors.

- LESSON 3: PUNCTUATION AND CASE IN LIST ITEMS (30 MINUTES)**
- Learn the punctuation rules for a long sentence, leader sentence and leader phrase.
  - Learn the case rules for leader sentences and phrases.
  - Correct punctuation and case in all types of lists.

- LESSON 4: BULLET POINT PROGRESSION (5 MINUTES)**
- Learn what the correct bullet point progression is in list items and sub-lists.
  - Practise using correct bullet point progression in lists.
  - Learn when to use a numbered list rather than a bulleted list.
  - Learn when to use a list and when to rather use paragraphs.
  - Identify appropriate and inappropriate use of lists.

**ASSESSMENT: LISTS AND BULLET POINTS (10 MINUTES)**

## SENTENCE SPRAWL AND PARAGRAPHS

Learn how to edit long sentences and to check for precise language (plain English). Practise correcting documents to ensure an absence of complicated vocabulary, long-winded phrases, redundancy, colloquial language, clichés and repetition of words. Also learn how to check paragraphs for their core idea and length.

Estimated duration: 1 hour

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: SENTENCE SPRAWL AND PARAGRAPHS (10 MINUTES)**

- LESSON 1: SENTENCE LENGTH (5 MINUTES)**
- Learn why it is important to use short, well constructed sentences when writing business documents.
  - Learn how to reduce sentence length without changing the main of the sentence.

- LESSON 2: PRECISE LANGUAGE (30 MINUTES)**
- Learn how readers expend energy when reading business documents and how this knowledge helps you write effective sentences.
  - Learn how to write brief sentences that don't include unnecessary words and phrases.
  - Learn how to write clearly and precisely to avoid misinterpretation.
  - Change long unwieldy sentences into brief and clear, short sentences.

- LESSON 3: PARAGRAPHS (5 MINUTES)**
- Learn the rules for correct paragraph construction.
  - Learn how to ensure you use short paragraphs when writing business documents.

**ASSESSMENT: SENTENCE SPRAWL AND PARAGRAPHS (10 MINUTES)**

# NUMBERS AND SYMBOLS

Learn the rules for abbreviating, punctuating, spacing and using case in numbers, digits, telephone numbers, time, currency, common symbols, measurement and dates, and how to check for their correct and consistent use.

Estimated duration: 1 hour

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: NUMBERS AND SYMBOLS (10 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: RULE OF NINE (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn what the rule of nine is and how to use it in business documents.
- Learn how to number chapters, and when to use hyphens and when not to use them.
- Identify correct and incorrect use of the rule of nine.

**LESSON 2: TELEPHONE NUMBERS (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the acceptable options to use when writing telephone numbers.
- Identify when telephone numbers are written incorrectly and change them to ensure a consistent approach.

**LESSON 3: TIME (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the acceptable options to use when writing time.
- Identify correct use of time in business documents and make changes to ensure a consistent approach.

**LESSON 4: CURRENCY (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to write currency correctly and consistently.
- Identify and change incorrect use of currency in business documents.

**LESSON 5: COMMON SYMBOLS (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to write common symbols and measurements correctly and consistently.
- Identify and correct incorrect use of common symbols and measurement in business documents.

**LESSON 6: DATE (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to write the date correctly and consistency.
- Identify incorrect use of dates in business documents and correct them.

**ASSESSMENT: NUMBERS AND SYMBOLS (10 MINUTES)**

# LAYOUT AND VISUALS

Learn how to edit documents for correct and consistent spacing and page setup including white space ratio, margins, indentations and fonts. Also learn how to check for appropriate use of visuals.

Estimated duration: 1 hour

**PRE-ASSESSMENT: LAYOUT AND VISUALS (10 MINUTES)**

**LESSON 1: SPACING (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for correct and consistent spacing in business documents.
- Identify correct and incorrect use of spacing.

**LESSON 2: WHITE SPACE RATIO (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn the rules for white space on a page.
- Learn the rules for correct use of text alignment, margins, indentations, fonts and page numbering.
- Identify correct and incorrect use of the above layout issues.

**LESSON 3: VISUALS (10 MINUTES)**

- Learn the correct way to use visuals in business documents.

**ASSESSMENT: LAYOUT AND VISUALS (10 MINUTES)**

# INTERACTIVE TUTORIALS

Estimated duration per tutorial: 45 minutes

**TUTORIAL:**           **GRAMMAR (45 MINUTES)**  
Complete an interactive tutorial that tests grammar knowledge.

**TUTORIAL:**           **PLAIN ENGLISH (45 MINUTES)**  
Complete an interactive tutorial that tests ability to write using the plain English guidelines.