

WORKSHOP

TIPS TO MAKE YOUR WRITTEN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION MORE EFFECTIVE

Brief Description

The humanity has used different means of communication that range from petroglyphs, tam-tams and ancient manuscripts to newspaper, telegraph, radio, telephone, television, e-mail, and social networks. Within these frameworks, the communication message usually had to comply with a specific set of standards in terms of the content and the outfit. These formal and informal standards aimed to increase the quality and effectiveness of communication. The written communication is what you practice on a daily basis in your professional life. This workshop will address the quality of the outfit of your written communication. It will mostly revolve around the proper ‘packaging’ of your written messages and documents, and will refer to the sometimes underestimated details, such as fonts, text spacing and indentation, better-formulated titles for your files and e-mail messages, and other adjacent issues.

Twenty years of work experience convinced me that accurate and well-formatted written communication was able to boost employees’ professional and career growth. When you relate with your partners and donors, better-shaped communication helps prove the world-class professionalism of your organization. An attention to the outfit of the written communication eventually helps advance your and your organization’s growth.

This workshop is based on the assumption that the participant uses standard English, US version. Today, English is the lingua franca of the international development work. A good deal of your communication, including drafts, proposals, translations, reports, policy papers, etc. is in English, therefore, it is particularly important to know the A-B-C of the correct formatting. Obviously, a similar set of rules would apply to the ‘outfit’ of a communication piece written in any other language; however, depending on the traditions and narratives of this or that language, the rules may differ.

Well-shaped formats better point on what the content should express, thus, helping to enhance the quality of the content of your written communication too. However, note that in case you need to enhance your skills in producing better-formulated content, you need to attend a different workshop or a series of workshops.

The training is useful for those who produce English-language content. NGO and CSO staff who fundraise in English, communicate with and report to donors in English, will particularly benefit from these tips.

TIP NUMBER ONE (given for free): Start formatting your document yet before you wrote the first lines of the draft content. Check the formatting scrupulously after the content is final.

See below a concise outline of the workshop (best viewed if you open this file in *Adobe Acrobat*)

Slide 1

TIPS TO MAKE YOUR WRITTEN ENGLISH- LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION MORE EFFECTIVE

Workshop module

Goal of the Workshop:

Participants learn and immediately apply a couple of simple but important tips on written communication

Audience:

Staff of any CSO:

- program
- admin
- finance

Format:

Interactive 'chamber' training

- up to 8 participants at a time
- 3 hours
- one 15-minute break

Tools:

- projector & screen OR smartboard
- printer (1)
- laptops (4)

Start of the workshop:

- Introduction of the trainer and participants

[5 min]

Slide 7

Means of communication the humanity ever used

slides with pictures, no text, interactive discussion

[5 min]

Standards used in communication

- importance of keeping up to standards

slides with pictures, no text; interactive discussion

[10 min]

Means of communication most used in organizational setting

- E-mail, social networks, web-sites
- Documents (Word, Excel, PDF, PPT)
- Phone
- Calendar

slides with text, no pictures; interactive discussion

[10 min]

Important elements of written communication

- Fonts: Serif vs. Sans Serif
- Indentation & Spacing
(MS Word; Google mail; MS Outlook)

slides with pictures/text; interactive discussion

[15 min]

Setting the default

- Fonts
- Indentation & Spacing

live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

‘Format Painter’

slide with picture, no text; live demonstration on the screen

[5 min]

Setting the Proofing Tools

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=35400>

live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

Table of Contents for MS Word documents (tentative)

slide with pictures, no text; live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

Hyperlinks

- MS Word
- PDF documents
- e-mails

slide with picture, no text; live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

Slide 16

Session 1 (90 min) is over

BREAK: 15 min

Unwritten rules

- titling documents
- titling e-mails
- setting calendar events

slides with text

[10 min]

E-mail signature

- samples
- pros & cons

slides with text

[5 min]

E-mail address as your identification

slides with text

[5 min]

Calendar usage

- My Calendars in Google Calendar

live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

Managing your contacts (tentative)

- phone numbers
- e-mail addresses

live demonstration on the screen

[10 min]

Practical work

participants break-up into pairs and work on a set of 5 or 6 tasks

[40 min]

Session 2 (80 min) is over

Training (180 min) is over