Business Communication

Business writing is any written communication like emails, memos, presentations or reports used in a professional setting. In this module, you'll learn how to make your business communications clear, well-structured, and actionable.

1. Business writing essentials

Key Learnings

With time and practice, we'll help you develop the skills you need to ensure your memos, emails and other business communications are direct, easy to understand, and quick to read. In this video, you'll learn: * Tips on writing for business

Video Transcript

Business writing is any written communication used in a professional setting, including emails, memos, and reports. It's direct, clear, and designed to be read easily. And with practice, you can become an effective business writer.

So whenever you're writing a business document, get to the point quickly. Tell your readers what they need to know upfront so they don't have to hunt for it. Make every sentence short and direct while keeping your paragraphs brief. Doing this will add focus while making your document easy to read and remember.

Most business writing needs a call to action, which is information that instructs and encourages a response from your readers. It lets them know what they should do, where to go, and so on. In addition to being professional, keep your writing polite. Consider using a brief greeting or conclusion, and remember that offering courtesies like "please" and "thank you" go a long way.

Revision is a key part of good writing, so after you finish your first draft, read it over and figure out what works and what doesn't. Clarify sentences, simplify word choices, and organise the structure until everything flows in a logical order. As part of your revision process, try reading your work aloud or ask someone to give you feedback. Both of these methods can help you discover new perspectives and ideas.

With so much to read and rewrite, don't be surprised if it takes a few revisions before your document is polished and ready to go. Remember, business writing is

a skill that takes a lot of practice to develop, but as you improve you will possess an incredibly valuable job skill.

2. How to write a powerful business report

Key Learnings

When companies need to make informed decisions, they rely on business reports. These reports use facts and data to analyse performance and provide recommendations for the future. In this video, you'll learn: * how to write and format a business report.

Video Transcript

When a company needs to make an informed decision, a business report can guide the way. These documents use facts and research to study data, analyse performance and provide recommendations for the future.

Business reports are always formal and objective, and every fact must be clear and backed up by a legitimate source, no matter if the report focuses on a single issue or an entire company. Let's look at the structure of a typical business report.

First, list your name, contact information, and the date of submission. We also recommend giving the report a title. Next, provide some background on the topic you'll be discussing, along with the purpose of the report itself. In the key findings, provide relevant facts and data using bulleted lists, charts, or any other medium that can help make your point. Be clear and specific because the entire report revolves around this information.

When you reach the conclusion, summarise and interpret the key findings, identify issues found within the data and answer any relevant questions. Then recommend solutions based on what you've presented. Remember to stay objective, impersonal and focused on the company's perspective.

For the references, list the sources for all the data you've cited. This allows your reader to learn where you got your information. Some companies may require an executive summary at the beginning of the report. An executive summary includes the background, key findings, and recommendations within a single section. This lets a reader learn the highlights without having to read the entire report.

While business reports may seem intimidating, you have the ability to create one of your own. Collect and present the facts in an organised way, and you'll help your company make informed decisions.

3. How to write an effective business email

Key Learnings

Email is now the cornerstone of business communication. Over the years, business emails have developed a style and structure that you can use to help create more effective messages. In this video, you'll learn: * the basics of writing a business email.

Video Transcript

For the past few decades, email has been a cornerstone of business communication. And over that time, it's developed a unique style and structure.

All business emails should be direct, clear, and easy to read. The formality of your writing, however, can vary depending on your company, your readers, subject matter, or other factors. No matter what you're writing, remember to stay professional because you lose control of an email once you click "Send." Emails can be copied and forwarded to others indefinitely, so make sure you choose your words carefully.

When it comes to the subject line, you want it to be brief and descriptive. If it's too vague or rambling, you may lose your readers' attention. Every email needs at least one recipient, but if you're including multiple recipients consider using the CC – or Carbon Copy – field. This keeps those extra readers in the loop without requiring them to respond.

Make your greeting brief and friendly, and address the recipient by name if you know it. The first name is preferable if you're more familiar with the recipient, and you should use their last name if you want to be more formal.

In the body of your email, start with your main point so it's easy to find, and keep your writing concise and focused on your readers. If you need a response from your readers, include a call to action so they know how to respond. Also, if you've attached a file to your email, be sure to mention it here.

As you reach the ending, offer a quick farewell such as "Thanks" or "Sincerely." Then give your name and contact information.

Writing concise emails is a powerful skill that you can develop through consistent practice. Keep writing and learning, and you'll become a more effective communicator with every email you send.

4. How to write a clear business memo

Key Learnings

Memos can be a useful way to update colleagues or make important announcements in a workplace setting. In this video, you'll learn: * how to write a business memo

Video Transcript

When you need to update your colleagues on important information or make an announcement at your workplace, a business memo can be an ideal way to address a specific audience in a formal context.

A memo is a document that is often created with a word processor and typically printed for distribution. The format is similar to email: It usually begins with a header section that lists recipients and other details. Let's take a closer look at what's included in the header.

To: Include each recipient's name and job title – for example, Miranda Lawson, Director of Marketing. If you're addressing a designated group, however, simply state the name of the group – for example, Accounting Department.

From: Include your name and title.

Date: Write out the complete date – month, day, and year.

Subject: Make the subject brief and descriptive.

Unlike emails or letters, most business memos skip the greetings, such as "Dear Miss Lawson," and immediately go into the body text. Whenever you start a paragraph in a memo, always put the main point of the paragraph first. You can also use bullets or numbers to clearly present points or lists. This will make your writing direct and easy to follow.

Memos generally don't include a farewell. It may be appropriate depending on your message or your company's style, but if you do include a farewell, make it brief.

Remember that revision is vital for any quality document. Before you submit your memo to your audience, consider getting feedback from a colleague to ensure your message is effective and professional.

Business memos are a powerful way to distribute information among your colleagues. As you practice and study, your memos will become more efficient and polished in no time.

5. How to format a business document

Key Learnings

Formatting a document for the first time can feel like a daunting process. But with a little help and some practice, you'll soon have it looking organised and professional. In this video, you'll learn: * how to format business documents.

Video Transcript

Formatting a business document can seem daunting, but with a little practice you can get your document looking organised and professional.

When handling important business topics, it may be tempting to format your document in a decorative or intricate fashion. However, the key to effective formatting is to keep it simple, even if your document's subject matter is complex. Simple formatting allows the content itself to be the focal point while making your document easy to read and navigate. Use traditional fonts, like Times New Roman or Arial; be sure to left align the text; and use single-spaced paragraphs.

As you use these tips, remember to be consistent throughout your document. Use one or two fonts per document, and make sure line spacing and alignment remains consistent. If you use graphics like images and charts in your document, make sure they're clear and easy to read. You can use as many graphics as needed, but don't add them solely for decoration. Unnecessary visuals can dominate the page and bury your message.

Properly formatting a business document can make a big difference in the quality of your work. Take time to format and organize your message, and it will be professional, clear, and effective.