



# Writers at Work Certificate Program

Self-paced Certificate Program – 100% Online – 4 Months to Complete – Begin Anytime

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## Course Overview

Your writing skills affect your professional image. The better your writing skills are, the better your image is and the better your chances for advancement. Effective writing in the workplace is an essential skill. Research shows that employers value workers who think creatively and communicate effectively.

The Writers at Work Certificate Program consists of four 10-hour courses that will allow busy professionals a flexible path toward learning valuable writing techniques. The program begins with a valuable refresher of grammar and punctuation and then takes you through the process of writing clear, concise, and complete documents.

## Outcomes

Effective business writing can set you apart from other employees, get you noticed by your superiors, and improve your chances of advancement.

You will gain these skills:

- Identify and correct common errors in grammar and punctuation.
- Revise ineffective sentences and generate clear and concise writing.
- Write clear, effective, and professional email messages that get your reader's attention.
- Understand a writing process to use when creating any document.
- Organize your ideas clearly.
- Connect words and ideas effectively using transitions, connectives, parallelism, and other strategies.
- Use specific techniques to adapt the tone of a document.
- Incorporate basic design elements to create visually appealing documents.
- Proofread, edit, and revise documents more effectively.

# Part 1: Eliminating Common Grammar Errors

## Course Description

Sentence mechanics are an essential foundation to good writing. You may have great ideas, but if your sentences are full of grammar errors, your reader may lose confidence in your professionalism, competence, and attention to detail.

Part I reviews the basic building blocks of good writing: understanding parts of sentences and speech, ensuring sentence completeness, and conquering common problems with subjects, verbs, and pronouns. Readings and exercises help reinforce your understanding of the concepts.

The instructor is available at all stages of the course for tutoring.

## Outcomes

You will gain these skills:

- Identify and correctly use various parts of parts of speech.
- Recognize and revise fragments and run-on sentences.
- Recognize and correct common problems with subject-verb agreement and pronoun errors.
- Identify and correct dangling and misplaced modifiers.
- Proofread more effectively.

## Assessment

You will complete self-check exercises and a mastery test (graded by the instructor) taken at end of the class.

## Outline

- Week 1: Review the parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc. and understand their functions. Review how different parts of speech are joined together to create grammatically correct sentences with special emphasis on verb tenses.
- Week 2: Learn how to recognize and revise fragments and run-on sentences.
- Week 3: Learn to recognize and revise common problems in subject-verb agreement and pronouns.
- Week 4: Learn to recognize and correct mistakes with adjectives, adverbs, and misplaced modifying phrases.

## Part 2: Perfecting your Punctuation

### Course Description

Correct punctuation is essential to good, clear writing. Incorrect punctuation can confuse readers, change the meaning of sentences, and reflect poorly on your professional image.

Part II of the review covers punctuation, providing a practical understanding of punctuation without the need to memorize countless rules. Weekly units teach the use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, colons, quotation marks, and parentheses. Readings and exercises help reinforce your understanding of the concepts.

The instructor is available at all stages of the course for tutoring.

### Outcomes

You will gain these skills:

- Identify and correctly use various punctuation marks including commas, semicolons, apostrophes, colons, etc.
- Proofread more effectively.

### Assessment

You will complete self-check exercises and a mastery test (graded by the instructor) taken at end of the class.

### Outline

- Week 1: Review comma rules and usage.
- Week 2: Learn the correct usage of semicolons and colons.
- Week 3: Review the use of other punctuation marks including apostrophes, dashes, hyphens, quotation marks, and parentheses.
- Week 4: Learn techniques to proofread more effectively.

## Part 3: Writing Clearly, Concisely, and Coherently

### Course Description

Don't let your good ideas get buried in dull, lengthy sentences or empty phrases. Make every word count. Capture and keep your reader's attention by using clear and concise sentences that create a coherent and eloquent message. Learn additional strategies to create effective email that increases your productivity.

Readings and exercises help reinforce your understanding of the concepts. You will receive personal feedback from the instructor on at least three writing assignments. The instructor is available at all stages of the course for tutoring.

### Outcomes

You will gain these skills:

- Recognize and eliminate wordy, empty, and redundant phrasing to write a concise message.
- Use active voice, action verbs, and precise words to create a clear message.
- Use transitional and connective words to reinforce the relationships between your words, sentences, and paragraphs.
- Write effective and professional email messages that capture your reader's attention and get a better response rate.

### Assessment

You will complete self-check exercises in each lesson. You will write at least three documents and receive personal feedback from the instructor.

### Outline

- Week 1: Learn strategies for writing more concisely by eliminating wordy, redundant, and empty phrases.
- Week 2: Learn strategies for writing more clearly by using words precisely, putting action in verbs, using the active voice, and more.
- Week 3: Understand how to develop ideas within a paragraph and use transitional words to guide the reader.
- Week 4: Learn how to structure email messages to be more effective.

## Part 4: Achieving a Professional Tone and Style

### Course Description

Professional writing includes more than just grammar, punctuation, and the arrangement of ideas. The tone and style of your message can keep your readers engaged or it can make them want to hit the delete key.

Part IV presents strategies to ensure the tone of your document is appropriate, positive, and professional. Learn to integrate basic graphic design techniques so that your documents are visually effective and readable. Master parallel writing structure to create sentences and bulleted lists that flow smoothly. Demonstrate your competence to readers by eliminating problems with commonly confused and misused words.

Readings and exercises help reinforce your understanding of the concepts. You will receive personal feedback from the instructor on at least three writing assignments. The instructor is available at all stages of the course for tutoring.

### Outcome

You will gain the following skills:

- Write documents with a professional tone.
- Use basic design techniques to create emails and documents that are visually effective and pleasing.
- Use parallelism when writing sentences, lists, and headings.
- Identify and correct common word usage errors.

### Assessment

You will complete self-check exercises in each lesson. You will write at least three documents and receive personal feedback from the instructor.

### Outline

- Week 1: Learn techniques for writing with a professional and positive tone. Understand how to improve the professional tone of any document. Know 12 words to avoid using in email.
- Week 2: Learn how to use basic graphic design elements, such as white space, headings, etc.
- Week 3: Learn to use parallel writing structure with sentence elements, lists, and headings.
- Week 4: Review commonly confused and misused words

## **Course Extensions**

This Certificate Course must be completed within the specified time period noted at the time of enrollment. Extension fees are applicable beyond the end date as follows: 1 month, \$149.00; 2 months, \$179.00; 3 months, \$199.00. Upon successful completion of this course, you may apply for a paper-based certificate from one of our Accredited University Partners. University certificate processing fees apply.