Training Outline

Writing for the reader

A business document or a marketing piece is a tool. Its function is to inform and persuade. Many business and marketing communications are poorly designed, failing to meet the needs of the reader. The result is frustration, waste, and lost opportunities.

This session examines the approaches required to make business and marketing writing more effective by embracing the needs of the reader.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will:

- understand the motivations behind reading

- be able to evaluate what needs to be written and how

- be able to use a briefing sheet to plan a business document.

Content

How do we read? Recognising different types of document, the function of the document, push and pull information, what the reader wants, F-patterns.

Using a briefing sheet to plan: practical steps to making the next business or marketing communication more effective.

Understanding the briefing sheet: types of reader, motivations of the reader, aims of the communication, solving the reader's problem, meeting the needs of the communicator, requirements of different media, assumptions and goals (bridging the knowledge gap), call to action.

Headlines and subject lines: how to label a communication and sections within that communication.

Jeremy Renals

January 2017

Editing communications like a pro

Every day brings another editing task. You may be improving something you've written, editing someone else's work, collaborating on a document or repurposing information for a new medium or audience. However, effective editing is a sadly neglected skill.

This session is an investment in getting better, faster, more effective written communications.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will:

- be able to get the best out of a finished document by focusing on requirements and reducing clutter

- understand how to improve and repurpose written information

- take away a step-by-step approach to effective editing.

Content:

Overview: reading before you start, checking the brief, high level editing, requirements of the finished communication, techniques for detailed editing, polishing and crafting, saying more by writing less.

Where and how to work: version control, paper vs on-screen, cloud and local editing, SharePoint vs Google Drive vs Word and email, naming conventions.

Creating a single tool: relevance to the brief, the 'key dynamic' (why a dog with two heads can't catch a rabbit), cutting away excess.

High level editing: building a case, models for ordering and structuring information, using subheads, bridging the knowledge gap.

Low level editing: extracting that thesaurus you swallowed, guidance on paragraphs, getting sentences and clauses right, dos and don'ts for bullet lists, shortening sentences, polishing and re-polishing.

Proofreading: paper vs on-screen, mistakes to avoid

Jeremy Renals

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