



Environment Agency embraces customer-focused writing and cultivates a new public image

Sector

Public sector and government

Areas of training

Customer-centred writing, communicating science and writing to influence

Delivery

In-person training plus follow-up coaching and e-learning

Delegates

4,000

The challenge

Inefficient, unclear and overly technical customer writing that was damaging the agency's public image.

The solution

Tailored in-person training with follow-up coaching and bespoke e-learning.

The results

A new culture of clear, accessible writing and a better relationship with a more engaged public.

A public body who must convey technical information owes it to their customers to keep their writing clear and accessible.

The Environment Agency is a public body that aims to protect and improve the environment and promote sustainable development. Managers within the organisation originally approached Emphasis to help make its documents and emails more accessible. The agency wanted to transform public opinion of it as a faceless bureaucracy by becoming more customer-focused.

'Our research revealed a real desire to provide the answers that people want as quickly and concisely as possible,' explains Elaine O'Donnell, Strategic Communications Development Manager. 'Staff wanted to turn paperwork around more efficiently and provide clear information to help people make environmental improvements.'

The Environment Agency originally signed a three-year contract with Emphasis and later reappointed the company to continue honing its writing skills.

Building trust and customer relationships

Emphasis designed a high-impact writing course, including modules on making technical subjects more accessible without dumbing down and writing to get results.

Previously, employees had focused on explaining the technical side of issues to customers, so Emphasis gave them tools to help build customer relationships and trust.

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Elaine O'Donnell, Strategic Communications Development Manager, Environment Agency



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This course has been delivered to nearly 4,000 employees within the Environment Agency, along with follow-up coaching clinics. Emphasis trainers have also delivered advanced masterclasses to keep improving the standard of writing at the agency, as well as tailor-made courses in different regions, including writing for customers and writing to influence.

Serving customers better

Staff who used to write in a technical and scientific way are now able to communicate clearly to the average reader, meaning they can better serve their customers.

'Emphasis carefully listened to and fully understood our training needs,' says Elaine. 'Its tailored writing courses are helping us to improve the text we provide. As a result, our written communications are becoming clearer and more accessible.'

Informal, interactive training

The delegates on the courses found the informal, interactive style helped them to relax and fully participate in the training. 'It gave me a totally different way of thinking,' explains one delegate. 'The trainer was brilliant. There were short bursts of practice and lots of interaction,' says another.

Towards a new writing culture

The training has helped to raise the profile of the Environment Agency, as the public that engage with it are now more aware of what it does. Employees are now able to better focus on clear, simple writing and there is an emphasis on continuous learning.

Emphasis has also implemented an e-learning programme for delegates so that they can keep practising their writing skills. It contains a series of interactive modules, which include explanations and exercises to embed learning and promote the new culture of clear, accessible writing.

5 reasons to choose Emphasis

1. Over 25 years' experience

We've helped improve writing and communications skills for over 80,000 delegates and we've worked with over 1,000 companies – including many just like yours.

2. Unique pre-course analysis

Using our unique method, we analyse the writing of every attendee before training, so our trainers have a solid understanding of each person's writing issues from the start.

3. Full course customisation

Our specialist course developers work hard to create a programme that's customised exactly to the problems your team are facing.

4. Post-course support

All delegates have access to our dedicated helpdesk for a year after their course, and we'll send them free tips and resources by email.

5. Our expert trainers

We only recruit trainers who have a strong background in professional writing and communications – and who are able to unfailingly deliver exceptional courses.

Get in touch with our team: call +44 (0)1273 732 888 or email info@writing-skills.com