



Transforming opinion writing at EY for insights that get press attention

Sector

Accountancy and consultancy

Area of training

Writing thought-leadership reports

Delivery

In-person and remote training and coaching

Delegates

80

The challenge

Overlong thought leadership reports lacking the strong insights that would grab client or media attention.

The solution

In-person and remote training and follow-up coaching sessions focused on expressing strong opinions and influencing readers.

The results

The tools to plan and write thought leadership reports with impact – resulting in 78 reports being picked up by the press from one unit alone.

Professional service organisations rely on intellectual capital and original ideas for their success. Thanks to Emphasis, 'Big Four' accountancy firm EY (formerly Ernst & Young) is distilling these into reports that strengthen its business.

EY research teams aim to position the company as a 'thought leader', so their reports need to be authoritative. But the firm called in Emphasis because too many analysts were producing long reports with no real viewpoint – and little to grab the attention of clients or the media.

Towards opinionated and influential writing

'The way people are educated to write by academia means there's a lot of deductive writing, which takes a long time to get to the point. There is a lot of descriptive writing, waffle and technical language, which almost disguises clarity of thought,' explains Simon Rhodes, Associate Director at EY.

After consulting with Simon to gain a clear understanding of the teams' needs, Emphasis designed a training programme that focused on how to express a strong opinion and influence readers, but remain succinct. It included techniques for creating an attention-grabbing introduction and a concise, powerful executive summary, and examined how to present technical information effectively to a non-technical, strategic audience.

A series of six-monthly follow-up reviews reinforced the training.

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Simon Rhodes, Associate Director, EY



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Reports with attitude - and impact

Aside from improving writing skills, the training has given EY analysts the tools to think clearly, as the methods encourage them to focus on their key messages.

'Where people have been trained and kept it up, the improvement has been vast. In my team, success is measured in terms of impact. We produce a lot of insightful reports that have been picked up by the press. Last year we had 78 press articles from my unit alone,' says Simon.

The follow-up sessions have ensured analysts keep on thinking about clarity and precision of writing style. 'I was impressed with the ongoing coaching. You go on a course and you think it's brilliant, but then you don't do anything with it in the future. There was a whole coaching process where Emphasis would review written work and give feedback,' says Simon.

Clear communication is an essential business asset

EY continues to see good business writing as a core company value, and continues to trust Emphasis as its preferred supplier to train staff in how to achieve this.

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5 reasons to choose Emphasis

1. Over 19 years' experience

We've helped improve writing and communications skills for over 50,000 delegates and we've worked with over 5,000 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

