

COURSE PROFILE: STRUCTURE WRITING

Title	Structured Writing
Length	3 days
Description	<p>Structured writing is widely accepted as the "state-of-the-art" in written business communication. Structured writing is a method of analyzing, organizing, and presenting information for documents such as user manuals, system documentation/requirements, and help systems</p> <p>Structured writing involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyzing subject matter, • classifying information into a few basic classes, • choosing the best method for presenting the class of information, and • organizing the results according to sequencing and hierarchy rules.
Target Audience	<p>Analysts, managers, and others that write the following kinds of documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System specifications • Functional requirements • User procedures • Help systems procedures • Web pages • Other business correspondence
Prerequisites	None
Learning Objectives	<p>The student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the five basic writing standards, • describe the seven structured writing standards, • classify the units of information, • choose the best method for presenting a unit, • write the unit of information using the chosen method, • properly title units, • sequence the units into groups, and • title and sequence the groups into a cohesive document.
Course Material	Each Student will receive a Structured Writing Manual, Author BIMS, Inc.
Cost	<p>The all inclusive local onsite fee for up to 15 students is \$6,820.00*.</p> <p>*Effective Date: 01/01/2008. This price does not include travel outside the Baltimore, MD or District of Columbia area. This does not include any offsite facility charge.</p>

COURSE PROFILE: STRUCTURE WRITING

Course Content

Introductions

- Housekeeping chores
- Identify problems writing procedure information
- Identify problems reading procedure information
- Background of structured writing
- Course goals

Basic Writing Standards

- Use active voice
- Keep verbs strong
- Avoid wordy, indirect expressions
- Choose simple, non-jargon

Structured Writing Rules and Standards

- Group information into small, easily understood units
- Title all information units
- Include only information that pertains to its title
- Organize units of information into progressively larger titled groups
- Use the same techniques, formats, and titles for similar information
- Use visuals whenever possible. Place them inside text as an essential part of the text
- Give information right where the reader needs it to understand the text quickly

Information Classes

The course covers the following information classes.

- Procedure - how do i do it
- Model - what does it look like and what are its parts
- Process – how does it work
- Definition - what is it
- Classification - what are the types
- Fact - what are the facts
- Organizer - how is this material organized
- Rule - what is the rule

For each of the information classes, the course covers:

- Definition
- Non-Examples
- How to Title the Information
- Standards
- Examples
- Clues
- Writing Techniques
- Exercise

COURSE PROFILE: STRUCTURE WRITING

Course Content, continued

How to Write Using Structured Writing Method

- Researching the subject area
- Analyzing the subject matter
- Designing the project
- Writing procedure information
- Defining supporting information
- Writing and sequencing supporting information
- Consolidating sections
- Writing organizer information
- Editing the project

Rewrite Considerations

- Characteristics of non-structured writing
- Sort and title information
- Eliminate nice-to-know
- Scope carefully
- Write procedure

Workshop

Students will apply the techniques learned during the class to their own material or other project.