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**THE GOOD-HUGHMOURED WORKOUT
ON GOOD BUSINESS COMMUNICATION SKILLS
(AND IN A GOOD CAUSE)**

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sked if they could do with a brisk down-to-earth workout on writing at work, most people warm to the idea. (But with VGSOH for preference, please.)

They know that being able to write clearly, succinctly and safely for page or screen is a vital business capability.

So it’s no surprise that many like the idea of refreshing and revitalising the set of skills that make up business literacy. After all, when did you last – or ever - have any discussion on why short paragraphs and sentences make sense, or the rationale for bullet-points, or how to check better, or the benefits of questions?

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his is where a Lighter Writer course can be a welcome and highly practical help for practically anyone whose job demands good communication.

It’s a sort of good-natured spring-clean of communications skills in the workplace. And Lighter Writer aims to enlighten – to help you understand better not only what and how, but why. With VGSOH.

Lighter Writer is also learning from a real person rather than on-line – responsive to and catering for individual needs (and away from screens and desks).

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ey features? The core is an intensive workout for up to 10 people.

* This could be a team or department, or mix from any level or function.
* So it would be suitable for managers and supervisors; executives; support staff; salespeople – in office, field, laboratory and other areas.
* A day’s group session is reinforced by 1-to-1 coaching a few weeks afterwards, and a later recap session.
* Attenders get a mix of short expert tutorials and many exercises.
* The material is dozens of examples in the public domain – plus extracts of their own recent writing at work.
* The workshop can also cover specific topics – such as writing for reports, proposals, and presentations big and small.
* Some of the material will be available on-line before and after, in slideshow and paper form.

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hey’ll be in good hands. The course tutor is Hugh Gibbons – bringing not only an outside eye but years of experience in healthcare marketing, business research, management journalism, teaching, communication, and a great diversity of public talks.

Lighter Writer is a special version of the dozens of communication courses he’s provided for dozens of organisations in business and the public sector.

Hugh is known for being a tutor with all the skills – and a very good sense of humour. He writes the bi-monthly PPhunnybones column in Pharmaceutical Physician, and created the Diploma in Applied Gelotology (the study of laughter). And his lectures on Writing Disorders for the MSc in Pharma Medicine were rated seriously enjoyable.

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nd here’s an angle that many people will applaud. Hugh’s paid nothing. All the fees for Lighter Writer courses go direct from you to a good cause – a small UK charity called Ray of Light formed to support a children’s centre in Zimbabwe.

Interested? See over for more information.

 **HUGH GIBBONS**
A Personal Profile in >250 words

Educated at King Edward’s School Birmingham and Trinity College Dublin, Hugh taught English and Economics before becoming an advertising agency copywriter.

He then headed up creative service and product marketing teams in several healthcare companies. Later, as Associate Editor of the Pharmaceutical Times, he was involved in heavy-duty writing, researching, interviewing and conference-organising.

Hugh then created PsyPhaa/Ahaa – an informal association for non-psychologists like himself to get a handle on what makes people, teams and organisations tick. The 100+ meetings became a sort of garden fence over which people of different disciplines and experience could happily chat – with an unusual mix of venues, speakers and topics. He also took part in much academic research on social psychology.

At the same time, Hugh provided business writing and other skills courses for many organisations – among them, leading healthcare, IT, and finance companies.

He was a regular lecturer on Medical Writing Disorders for the MSc in Pharmaceutical Medicine; and writes the PPhunnybone end column in Pharmaceutical Physician.

Hugh is a popular public speaker, whose audiences have included social and arts clubs, charities, churches, medical societies, historical and archaeological associations, police, the RAF and Royal Navy, and many schools.

He’s an education and media volunteer with the aid agency CAFOD. Hugh has also developed his own one-man organisation Just1, helping social justice and good citizenship education for tens of thousands of children.

2013 PRICE

The all-in price for Lighter Writer for up to 10 people is £2013. The only extra is for Hugh’s travel/accommodation expenses – at cost.

For further enlightenment, or to talk through a possible course, contact Hugh Gibbons hughgibbons@just1.org.uk





SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENT

* DAY1 is a collective workshop. You’ll need quiet room with tables, screen and laptop projection. It could be a half day.
* DAY2 about a month later is a 1-to-1 coaching clinic on individuals’ issues. This just needs a small room or quiet corner with a table. You’ll need to arrange 30-40 minute appointments – maximum 5 in the morning, 5 in the afternoon.
* DAY3 is around 2-3 months later, and is a reminder, refresher and AOB time. This can be a mix of group and individual coaching as appropriate. Hugh is happy to fit in.

AUTHENTIC EXAMPLES

Previous courses have shown the value of using delegates’ own writing output as study material. So to generate this – and an understanding of needs - at least a week beforehand attenders will need to e-mail Hugh...

* Their Personal Profile. Like Hugh’s opposite, this is their short account of themselves – in fewer than 250 words.
* A couple of samples of their recent writing at work – for example, pages from a report, typical e-mails, or briefing. NB This should not include anything sensitive or seriously confidential. Hugh will extract parts for discussion.
* There’ll be a little warm-up work – a good-humoured slideshow that people can work through at their own pace and place.

SYLLABUS TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS

There’s no hard and fast syllabus, but the general idea will be to let everyone there:

* Identify, diagnose and treat the problems that make reading heavy going – such as issues of paragraph and sentence length, tone of voice, grammar, spelling, punctuation, ambiguity and consistency
* Know why and how to lighten, tighten and brighten writing with questions, links, bulleting and natural language
* Give guidance on courtesies and niceties
* Weigh up the reader-friendliness of a page or screen – exploring line length, margins, type fonts, headers and footers, rules, formatting and navigation aids
* Show how to apply a light touch in offering advice or suggestions to colleagues.
* Plan, organise, draft and finalise better
* Evaluate the quality of writing and thinking of suppliers, agencies and consultants
* Share some simple advice on speaking on your feet – including voice exercises, keeping an audience awake, and avoiding the perils of Poorpoint...