

Effective Writing in Plain English On-Site Training Programs for Professionals or Staff

- Instructor:** C. Edward Good, author of *A Grammar Book for You and I ... Oops, Me!* (Literary Guild Selection) (favorably reviewed by Bryan Garner) (favorably reviewed by William Safire in *The New York Times*); author of *Mightier than the Sword—Powerful Writing in the Legal Profession* (used at Yale Law School).
- Objective:** To instruct your personnel in the art of effectively writing in plain English.
- Services:** **Various services are available.**
- **On-Site Training.** Training programs in effective writing for your professionals or staff. Programs typically last one or two days but can be tailored to suit the needs of your organization. Grammar refresher courses also available.
 - **Feedback.** Your personnel may submit writing samples by email to Mr. Good. He reviews them, provides written feedback, and returns them to the writer. The writer then calls him for an individual-feedback session.
- Benefits:** **Your organization will reap the benefits in many ways.**
- **Client Satisfaction.** Clients of, or leaders in, your organization often complain about receiving correspondence and documents they can't understand. By insisting on clear writing, you can establish standards of clarity that will impress the readers of your documents.
 - **Recruiting.** When recruits see the assistance you provide in the field of effective writing, they will recognize the advantages of affiliating with your organization. By marketing these services in your recruiting materials and on your website, you can distinguish yourself by demonstrating your commitment to training and development.
- References:** Chris Foley, Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP, (571) 203-2720, christopher.foley@finnegan.com.
- Robert F. Parsley, Miller & Martin, Chattanooga, Tennessee (423) 785-8211, bparsley@millermartin.com.
- Rebecca Vogler, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, (202) 336-5500, rvogler@apa.org

EFFECTIVE WRITING IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Introduction

Many of the nation's leading corporations and federal agencies have commissioned Ed Good to conduct training programs in effective writing for their managers, scientists, engineers, lawyers, and staff. Corporations have called on him to teach writing to technical writers, engineers, scientists, and lawyers. Government agencies are recognizing distinct problems in the written communication produced by their personnel and have employed Mr. Good to train thousands of government officials in the art of writing in plain English.

A Sampling of Training Experience

Writer-in-Residence. In 1993, Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP, a 400-member intellectual-property firm in Washington, retained Mr. Good as its Writer-in-Residence to provide ongoing training to partners, associates, and support staff, and to assist with the continual improvement of the firm's written work product. His duties include associate training, review of associates' writing samples, assisting with publications, editing documents for clients, providing all-firm emails on matters of grammar and style, and responding to emailed questions on issues of style or on the interpretation of language in legal documents.

The personnel at Finnegan Henderson have multiple advanced degrees in biotechnology, engineering, computer science, electrical science, and a host of other scientific disciplines.

- **Federal Agencies.** The IRS commissioned Mr. Good to develop and conduct a series of courses in persuasive writing for more than 1,500 litigators nationwide.

Other federal agencies sponsoring the course include the Department of Labor, SEC (New York and Washington), FTC, CFTC, MSPB, DOJ Tax, DOJ Antitrust, Navy JAG, Air Force JAG, Army JAG, Department of Veteran Affairs, IRS, EEOC, FAA (lawyers and engineers), and many others.

Note. More detailed descriptions of these programs appear in the Addendum.

Instructor

Ed Good was graduated *cum laude* by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After graduation, he spent a year traveling around the world as one of five national recipients of the Corning Glassworks Traveling Fellowship.

He continued his studies at the University of Virginia School of Law, receiving his J.D. degree in 1971. Mr. Good accepted a general faculty appointment as Director of Legal Writing at the University of Virginia School of Law in 1975.

In 1977, Mr. Good was selected as one of two Tom C. Clark Supreme Court Fellows to serve the Supreme Court of the United States and the Federal Judicial Center.

Mr. Good is the author of five books: (1) *A Grammar Book for You and I ... Oops, Me!* (A Literary Guild Selection), (2) *Mightier than the Sword—Powerful Writing in the Legal Profession*, (3) *Citing & Typing the Law—A Guide to Legal Citation & Style*, (4) *Legal Research—Without Losing Your Mind*, and (5) *What a Great Idea!* (HarperCollins 1992) (ghostwriter).

A Grammar Book for You and I ... Oops, Me! is a Literary Guild Selection and was favorably reviewed by William Safire in *The New York Times*. *Mightier than the Sword* has received favorable reviews in legal journals throughout the world and has been used at Yale Law School for years. Excerpts from reviews of both books appear below.

COSTS

Your organization may choose the services you want and pay for individual services at the following rates: (1) Training Programs are billed at \$3,500 per day (discounts for multiple days) and (2) all other services are billed at \$250 per hour. For individual feedback, Mr. Good typically spends three to four hours for each person. You may set an upper limit on the amount charged for these services.

Travel and Lodging

When Mr. Good travels to any location outside the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, your organization will reimburse him for travel and lodging. Mr. Good flies coach or takes the train and does not require first-class accommodations.

CONTENT OF THE COURSE

Mr. Good's course on writing style helps writers identify the causes of dense, convoluted prose. These include using too many nouns and adjectives to hide the meaning of verbs (nominalization), failing to use action verbs, relying too frequently on the passive voice, overusing the verb *to be*, favoring clauses over phrases (ever hear of a "well-claused report"?), and writing sentences without end. Once your personnel understand the grammatical concepts behind these problems, they can start changing their habits and produce a style centered around the principles of plain English.

Mr. Good offers instruction on "content." The program teaches writers various theories of organization and stresses ways to present information in a brain-friendly way. Techniques include writing two kinds of introductions, structuring effective paragraphs, and engaging in 14 distinct strategies of transition to ensure a smooth flow.

Mr. Good also provides courses in grammar and courses for those who use English as a second language.

COURSE MATERIALS

Mr. Good will send PDF files of the course materials for you to reproduce for each course participant. You may also purchase copies of Mr. Good's book, *A Grammar Book for You and I ... Oops, Me!* The book goes far beyond grammar and teaches the strategies of style Mr. Good shares in his course. The retail price of the book is \$17.95, but Mr. Good passes along his author's discount to produce a price of \$10.00.

REVIEWS OF *A GRAMMAR BOOK FOR YOU AND I ... OOPS, ME!*

William Safire, *The New York Times*

"A good read for word mavens." On Language, Summer Reads
July 7, 2002, Sunday, Section 6, Page 10

Bryan Garner

This book will awaken anyone's dormant interest in language—and help people overcome a fear of grammar. With verve and wit, Ed Good rescues grammar from ill-deserved neglect.

—Bryan A. Garner, Author, *A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage*, *The Oxford Dictionary of American Usage and Style*, and *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Then, in an easy style, Good takes the reader through 419 pages of proper usage of the English language. This is Strunk & White times two. And as authoritative and joyful to read.

"Laying Down the Law on Grammar," July 28, 2002

Washington Post

His expertise is gaining recognition. William Safire mentioned Good's book in his "On Language" column in *The New York Times Magazine* on July 7.

"Waterford Man Has Made It His Life's Work to Right Grammar Wrongs," Vicky Moon, Sunday, July 21, 2002; Page LZ03

CopyEditor

If you're looking for a painless crash course in grammar, turn to this brilliantly readable primer. From parts of speech to parallel structure, the ground covered is comprehensive; the prose is lively and clear.

June-July 2002 edition

DuPont

Clarity of expression is essential in our business. Ed Good's book—especially in combination with the course he presented at DuPont—provides powerful tools to help our technical writers explain complex scientific concepts in understandable prose.

—Vernon R. Rice, Vice-President, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company

Caterpillar

We stress the importance of straightforward, concise, grammatically correct writing. This entertaining book will help us write about complicated subjects in a way our readers can easily comprehend.

—Byron G. Buck II, Senior Intellectual Property Attorney, Caterpillar Inc.

REVIEWS OF *MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD*

Hon. David A. Nelson, U.S. Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit

You can open *Sword*, like Dr. Johnson's dictionary, to almost any page and read with both pleasure and profit what is found there. What you will find, among other things, is a good explanation of how grammar can help you straighten out writing that isn't ungrammatical, exactly, but that lacks grace, clarity, and style.

42 Admin. L. Rev. 457 (1990)

The Journal of the Delaware State Bar Association

Good provides a series of clear analytic tools for determining why prose intended to be eloquent and persuasive so often turns out flabby and downright disagreeable to read. For example, he has an excellent passage on defining and nondefining relative pronouns and the confusion attendant upon disregarding their proper use. The lawyer whose writing derails a reader's attention by forcing him to figure out what the writer meant to say but said badly often transforms the reader (who may be a judge) into a foe.

Hon. Thomas C. Gordon, Jr., Justice, Virginia Supreme Court (ret.)

The powers that be should require the bar to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest *Mightier than the Sword*.

Prof. Charles H. Whitebread II, USC Law Center

Mightier than the Sword is a first-rate work. It teaches you exactly how to improve your writing in law school and beyond.

Washington State Bar News

Good packages his rules in an engaging narrative style, with examples easy to remember. It's the sort of book you can remember without having to think about it much.

Student Lawyer

What's different about [*Sword*] is not the ground that [the author] plows, but how deeply he plows it. Most guidebooks tell you to write with verbs (or, put another way, to avoid noun-based prose), give you a few examples, and turn you loose. If you want to learn the real *technique*, the *grammar* of transforming noun-based into verb-based prose, you have to look elsewhere for help.

But Good doesn't send you elsewhere for help. Instead, he defines the writing problem—and solution—in grammatical terms, and then explains those terms to you so you'll know precisely how to diagnose and cure the sickness in your prose.

Library Journal

This is a rare feat: a book on writing style and grammar that is easy to follow and fun to read. Recommended for all legal and writing collections.

CONCLUSION

We believe that high schools, colleges, and graduate schools have neglected the field of effective writing. Perhaps many people believe that good writing simply cannot be taught, that either people have a talent for writing or they do not, that writing ability cannot be acquired.

Our experience proves otherwise. In the 1980s, Mr. Good provided a series of intensive training programs for the Associate Chief Counsel's Office of the IRS. He developed and conducted a program for more than 1,500 litigators throughout the country. He read and analyzed the deficiencies found in writing samples of the class participants, met individually with them, and wrote an analysis of each participant's writing. The response of the attorneys in this program was overwhelmingly positive, one proclaiming the program "the best I've had in more than 20 years with the Internal Revenue Service."

Similarly, in 1993, the intellectual-property firm of Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP, retained Mr. Good to present a series of programs to all 100 associates. Because of the success of this program, the firm retained Mr. Good as

Counsel and Writer-in-Residence to meet individually with partners and associates—most of whom have advanced degrees in science, engineering, and technology. He provided ongoing critique, feedback, and suggestions, and assisted the firm's attorneys in preparing articles for publication.

We believe that the services proposed for your office will have the same effect. Your personnel will learn the features of good writing. They will learn the principles of plain English. They will learn the recurring pitfalls that discourage clarity and often prevent communication itself. With practice, they will learn to change their writing habits, which have gone uncriticized and perhaps undetected throughout their careers.

We invite your response to this proposal and express our willingness to discuss your training needs with you at your convenience. Please call Mr. Good on his cell phone at 240-GRAMMAR (240-472-6627).

Or send him an email at cedwardgood@hotmail.com.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Addendum

A Sampling of Training Experience

- **On-Site Training Programs.** Law firms commissioning Mr. Good's training programs include Miller & Martin; Hogan & Hartson; RatnerPrestia, Kirkpatrick & Lockhart; Squire, Sanders & Dempsey; Patton, Boggs & Blow; Dewey Ballantine; Nilsson, Robbins, Dalgarn, Berliner, Carson & Wurst; Baker & Botts; Kaufman & Canoles; Schatz & Schatz, Ribicoff & Kotkin; Mintz Levin; and others.
- **Corporations** sponsoring the course include Philips, Westinghouse, GlaxoSmithKline, PPG Industries, Pratt & Whitney, Hershey Foods, General Electric, Caterpillar, Coca-Cola, DuPont, Kraft Foods, and others.
- **Miller & Martin**, a 150-lawyer firm with offices in Atlanta, Chattanooga, and Nashville, retained Mr. Good to develop and conduct the Miller & Martin Writing Academy. The program consists of two days of classroom work for 25 attorneys and Mr. Good's review and feedback on writing samples submitted by participating attorneys. The firm makes the program available each year.
- **Philips Electronics.** In November 2005, Mr. Good presented a one-week program to lawyers and paralegals at the company's office in Shanghai, China. In May 2006, Philips invited Mr. Good back to present a one-week advanced course in Shanghai. In November 2006, Mr. Good presented a two-day program to technical writers at the company's headquarters in Holland.
- **DuPont.** Mr. Good presented a two-day course for the company's IP lawyers in 1999. A vice-president wrote a review of Mr. Good's *Oops Me* book:

Clarity of expression is essential in our business. Ed Good's book—especially in combination with the course he presented at DuPont—provides powerful tools to help our technical writers explain complex scientific concepts in understandable prose.

- **Caterpillar.** Mr. Good presented a two-day course for technical people and paraprofessionals in September 2001. A senior IP counsel wrote a review of *Oops Me*:

We stress the importance of straightforward, concise, grammatically correct writing. This entertaining book will help us write about complicated subjects in a way our readers can easily comprehend.