**Writing Skills: Definition and Examples**

Writing skills allow you to communicate clearly with others and create useful resources for the workplace. Even professions that don't focus on writing require written communication skills, from the initial application to daily tasks and record-keeping.

Employers look for people with strong writing skills to represent their company and grow into leadership roles. Having a range of writing skills can enable professionals in any industry to get noticed by employers, advocate for their interests and get work done more effectively.

In this article, we will provide an overview of some of the most important writing skills in the modern workplace and provide instructions on improving them.

**What are writing skills?**

Writing skills include all the knowledge and abilities related to expressing ideas through the written word. The ability to clearly communicate ideas through writing is in high demand for employers in any industry. Well-written documents, emails and posts can persuade customers to purchase a product or convince investors to partner with a company.

Technical knowledge about writing conventions, style guides and formatting for different situations are also an important part of writing skills. Knowing what situations call for different styles of writing and being able to set an appropriate tone over text are both important writing skills that any person can use at work.

**Why are writing skills important?**

Writing skills are important because they allow people to get a point across without being physically present. Many employers get their first impression of future employees through the writing skills they display in their resume, cover letter and email communications.

Writing skills influence the quality of your work and how others perceive your professionalism, which can have a direct effect on your ability to get an interview and excel at work. Writing skills are transferrable, so developing a strong understanding of writing processes allows you to maintain clear communication and accurate documentation in any workplace.

**Examples of writing skills**

Professional writing is a complex process that involves different skills for planning, drafting and editing. Great writers must be able to quickly learn new concepts and translate ideas into original content.

Some areas of writing are highly specialized and require extensive knowledge in a single area, like scientific or legal writing. Others use broad soft skills to relate to an audience through creative writing or blogging. Some of the best writing skills include:

* Research
* Outlining
* Editing
* Reading comprehension
* Time management

**Research**

Research allows writers to find accurate information and best practices related to writing in a particular style or about a particular piece of content. Writers often have to write about subjects that they are not familiar with, so finding quality sources quickly is an important skill.

**Outlining**

Outlining is creating a plan for the structure and flow of a piece of writing. Good writing needs to have a logical structure in order to make sense to a reader. Your ability to organize sentences and paragraphs in the most compelling way influences how others perceive you and understand the point of your writing.

**Editing**

After writing the first draft of your piece, you need to be able to edit. From checking an email for spelling errors to re-writing a grant proposal, all writing should undergo some level of editing. Editing involves reading your own writing from another perspective and considering how well it suits your goals. When editing your own work, think about your word choice and tone, removing any irrelevant phrases.

**Reading comprehension**

Reading comprehension skills help you respond to prompts, reply to messages and learn about new content. People use reading comprehension skills to assess the tone and main idea of a piece of writing. Having good reading comprehension also helps you edit your own work by determining if your point comes across from the perspective of a reader.

**Time management**

Time management is key when writing anything beyond a simple message or email. You should be able to spend your time efficiently when writing and accurately plan for how long it will take to write and edit your piece. Many writers over-edit their work and end up wasting time without improving the quality of their writing, so a good writer must recognize when to step away from a piece of writing.

**Tips on improving writing skills**

While some people are naturally talented at writing, anyone can develop their writing skills over time. Once you understand the different types of writing skills, you can focus on how you use them in the workplace and improve over time. Identify your strongest writing skills and develop strategies to improve those skills to a professional level:

* Take grammar quizzes.
* Know your audience.
* Read your writing aloud.
* Vary your sentence structure.
* Practice daily.
* Read regularly.

**Take grammar quizzes**

Even the most experienced writers have trouble with grammar, and taking grammar quizzes or playing games online is a great way to hone your knowledge of spelling and sentence structure.

**Know your audience**

Practice writing one prompt for different audiences and notice how your tone shifts. Before you begin writing, consider what your audience values and how you can use your word choice and sentence structure to appeal to them.

**Read your writing aloud**

Read your writing aloud during the editing process to catch any errors that you might not have noticed otherwise. Reading aloud also helps you hear any awkward phrasing and get an idea of your overall tone and effectiveness.

**Vary your sentence structure**

As you write, try to vary your sentence structure to give your writing rhythm. A mix of short and long sentences with different literary devices can keep the reader interested and create a natural flow that guides them through your writing.

**Practice daily**

Even if you don't have to write every day at work, practice writing in some way every day. Focus your time on the types of writing where you most need to improve. Give yourself writing prompts and challenge yourself to try out different skills.

**Read regularly**

One of the best ways to improve your writing is to read a variety of writing styles daily. The more exposure you have to quality writing, the better you will be able to produce great writing yourself. Reading helps you understand how to apply the writing skills you have learned.

**How to highlight writing skills when applying for jobs**

Writing skills have a direct influence on the process of finding a job and excelling in your career. Emphasize your writing skills at each step of the job search by using these methods:

**Writing skills for resumes**

Your resume shows employers your understanding of structure, grammar and editing. Resumes convey a large amount of information within a small amount of space, so your word choices is especially important. Use consistent verb tenses throughout the resume, make sure your formatting is consistent, check your spelling carefully and remove any repetitive information.

**Writing skills for cover letters**

When writing your cover letter, you can show more of your creative writing ability and use a persuasive tone. While resumes show your technical writing skills, cover letters give you an opportunity to display your organization skills and develop an idea through multiple paragraphs.

**Writing skills for the interview**

If you use email to schedule your interview, use your writing skills to send professional, clear messages with no spelling or typing errors. After the interview, send a thoughtful, brief thank you message to your interviewer to reiterate your interest in the position.