

Legal Writing: From Editor to Mentor



This program has been accredited by the Law Society for 4.5 Professionalist Hours and 4.5 New Member CPD Hours

There is no such thing as good writing, only good rewriting.

– Justice Louis D. Brandeis

Program Description and Objectives

This two-part writing program will help your senior associates write legal prose more precisely and concisely. Participants will also learn how to provide valuable and lasting writing feedback. The first part of the program is a half-day practical and interactive writing workshop designed to sharpen participants' editing and feedback skills. Participants will complete a number of practical editing exercises and critique each other's writing. The second part of the program is a 45-minute individualized coaching session focusing on a current writing project. This program will teach your senior associates how to identify and correct their own writing errors, as well as those of the lawyers they supervise, helping each to quickly become better legal writers.

Program Highlights

Myths about writing

Rewriting in stages: revising, editing, and proofreading

Creating time to rewrite

Feedback tips and templates

Professional Competencies

Analysis and Problem Solving

Business Writing

Client Service

Communication

Decision Making and Judgment

Managing Time

Teamwork

Who Should Attend

Senior associates who have been practicing for more than three years and who edit the work of others. This program is designed for eight to twelve participants.

Program Preparation

One week before the program, participants should:

- e-mail a three to five page recent sample of their legal writing to the instructor; and
- complete a brief online writing survey.

The instructor will use the writing samples and survey results to custom design workshop activities.



350 - 1 First Canadian Place
Toronto Board of Trade Tower
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Participants should come to their coaching session prepared to discuss and work on a current writing project.

Sample Program Agenda

Day One

- 8:30 am Program Overview
- Rewriting: the essence of good legal writing
 - Rewriting in stages
 - Rewriting with your ears
 - Writing warm-up
- 9:00 am Stage One: Revising
- Evaluating content, organization, and structure
 - Critiquing and revising excerpts from participants' writing samples
- 9:45 am Stage Two: Editing
- Examining length, clarity, and continuity
 - Editing exercises
 - Critiquing and editing excerpts from participants' writing samples
- 10:30 am Break
- 10:45 am Stage Three: Proofreading
- Sweating the small stuff (spelling, punctuation, format, consistency, and editorial style)
 - Proofreading excerpts from participants' writing samples
- 11:30 am Avoiding Red Ink: Feedback Tips and Templates
- How to focus on larger, substantive concerns and not get distracted by surface errors
- 12:00 pm Workshop Conclusion
- 12:15 pm Lunch Break
- 1:30 pm Individual Coaching Sessions
- 6:00 pm End of Day One

Day Two

- 9:00 am Individual Coaching Sessions
- 6:00 pm End of Program



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About the Facilitator



Shelley Appleby-Ostroff, B.A, LL.B

Shelley received her law degree from the University of Western Ontario and has over 20 years experience as a practicing lawyer, senior executive in the federal public service, mediator, and executive coach. She is a member of the International Coach Federation and has a keen interest in legal writing. She is currently completing her Masters degree in Writing Studies and teaches written advocacy at the University of Ottawa's law school.

At Phoenix Legal, Inc., Shelley provides professional development programming, coaching, and consulting to law firms and legal departments with an emphasis on refining lawyers' writing skills. She also provides outplacement and coaching services.

Her continued exposure to students at the beginning of their careers, and to lawyers as they develop, provides her with comprehensive insight into the mindsets of legal professionals throughout their professional careers.

Cost & Availability

For more information on availability and cost, please contact:

- Shelley Appleby-Ostroff
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or

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kmackay@phoenix-legal.com



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