



Writing Skills

Dods has worked extensively with Government departments, their agencies, and the wider public sector to develop writing skills that reflect their standards, aims and objectives.

Audiences include senior teams and directors as well as levels below.

Dods' trainers teach drafting skills using core models and planning tools that translate across different organisations as well as tailoring examples to the organisation so that the learning is immediately relevant and applied.

Specific areas that we cover:

- Board reports
- Technical reports
- Policy briefings and submissions
- Freedom of Information and Parliamentary Questions
- General correspondence with the public and stakeholders
- Ministerial correspondence
- Writing for social media
- Press communications

Our **approach to learning is facilitative** and based on coaching and reflective practice. What this means in practice is that our facilitators will work with your delegates to develop understanding of specific tools and models to support developing the right drafting style.

We cover drafting for different purposes, for example making technical reports accessible to non-technical audiences and persuading and influencing.

Our **facilitators are ideally suited** to this type of requirement having held senior positions in Government and the wider public sector in communications, policy and operational roles. This means they have been practitioners in writing board reports, policy papers and briefings, so bring their understanding of complexity in public sector policy and the presentation of it to the training.



Facilitator Team



Katharina Roelofs

Katharina Roelofs has worked in strategic communications, press office and events and visits in 3 major government departments: The Department of Health, Foreign Office and

Department for Education. She directed and coordinated high-profile communications campaigns including stakeholder management, press handling, social media, speeches and events.

Katharina has extensive experience working with the media on proactive and reactive media stories and worked as celebrity Sir Michael Parkinson's personal press officer in his role as Dignity Ambassador. She led successful campaigns on subjects such as universal infant free school meals, curriculum, pupil premium, bowel cancer, Afghanistan, the Dementia Strategy and the Prime Minister's "Carers" Strategy.

She currently provides communications advice and training to UK central government departments on topics such as working with Ministers, media training, writing skills, effective presentations, negotiations and how to get the most out of your team.

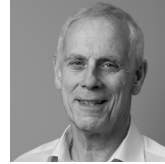


Katie Driver

Katie Driver is an experienced trainer and qualified business coach. She draws upon a long and varied Civil Service career within the Departments for Education and for Work and Pensions and their

predecessors, including over a decade as a Senior Civil Servant. Katie has developed domestic education and EU employment policy and worked across Government on areas such as the Red Tape Challenge. She has also worked as Private Secretary for a Minister of State and a Permanent Secretary, enabling her to learn about leadership and the processes of Government at the highest levels.

Katie now works in professional and organisational development across the public and private sectors, thus bringing additional breadth to her experience.



Richard Hillsdon

Richard Hillsdon has had over 25 years' experience as an occupational psychologist, trainer, coach and counsellor, as well as policy civil servant. His training, coaching and consultancy

work has included policy development, selection, career development, communications, performance management, privatisation, and pay and reward systems in over 40 government departments and agencies as well as the private sector and local government.

His career includes being Principal Psychologist in the Ministry of Defence and Head of the MOD's Personnel Management Support Group. In the last 10 years, he has specialised in the design and delivery of training in writing skills to civil servants up to SCS level.



Sheree Dodd

Sheree Dodd is a former Director of Communications at the UK Government's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI – now BEIS)), Deputy Director and Press Secretary to the Secretary of State at the

Department for Work and Pensions and Head of News at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO).

She offers a powerful combination of experience in leading complex communications activity as well as national media practice from 15 years as an industrial and political journalist for the Mirror newspaper. During that time, she also covered defence, reporting on stories from NATO headquarters.

Sheree is in high demand as a trainer in effective writing, strategic communications and media handling. She has worked with Dods Training leading a wide range of training for clients ranging from the House of Commons, Ministry of Defence, Department for International Trade, the Department for International Development and the Latvian EU Presidency team.



Facilitator Team



Carys Davis

Carys Davis is a freelance communications consultant and trainer. She has worked in communications roles in-house for charities, political parties and the UK financial services regulator.

As a freelancer, she copywrites a range of materials for clients, including websites, brochures, sales copy, press releases, social media content, articles, newsletters and reports. She delivers writing skills training for Dods regularly, with the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization as a key client.



Sarah Wachter

Sarah Wachter has worked with international bodies, development banks, multinationals, governments, and parliaments to improve their ability to communicate effectively in writing and

in presenting – virtually and in person - in order to boost their ability to achieve core objectives. This coaching and training has been carried out in regions as diverse as the EU, Russia, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southern and West Africa. Recent assignments include developing strategic communications for board members of the European Central Bank, coaching and writing advice for the head of the VivaTech conference in Paris, strategic communications training for government agencies in Ethiopia, training UN Food and Agriculture Organization policy staff on effective writing and presenting skills, and on the ‘art of the elevator pitch’ for FAO policymakers in East Africa.

Case Studies

HMCTS

Dods developed a course to improve Civil Service papers and submissions, incorporating HMCTS Human Voice of Justice Principles of listening, explaining and guiding as well as adapting language for the audience, using Plain English and being able to construct a concise argument.

“The course helped me understand how to write as a newly started civil servant. It helped both my ability to write and commission requests etc but also to read and recognise commissions produced and sent to/through me.”

“The course did not suffer as a result of being delivered virtually. The facilitator was excellent; very passionate and knowledgeable on her subject and willing to share this with others. her delivery style was just right for the group and I am sure everyone got a great deal from attending.”

Sandy Brown

The Management Board at Sandy Brown identified improvements needed in the quality of technical reports. Dods worked with the Board to agree objectives of the training, first delivering the course to all directors and the CEO, to agree consistent principles and clearance processes.

Dods then delivered the course to everyone in the organisation supporting to create a mind shift across all staff and embed the principles of plain English.

Homes England

Dods delivered this course to senior officials at Homes England, in partnership with the Management Board. The course focused on reducing the length and improving the clarity of reports through teaching a range of structuring and planning tools. Dods produced a highly tailored course through close and frequent collaboration with the Homes England commissioning team.

The course and facilitator were rated highly by participants.

