



# Workshops 2012

[www.word-smiths.co.uk](http://www.word-smiths.co.uk)

**Speed Reading**

**Mind Mapping**

**Making the Most of Your Memory**

**Effective Business Writing**

**Effective Report Writing**

**Effective Minute Writing**

**Grammar on the Rocks**

**Proofreading for Business Success**

**Business Planning Skills**



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## What people say about Word Smiths courses

“Great to find that my reading speed increased by farfold in just a few hours - in such an enjoyable day.”

“Jane’s enthusiasm came across and kept my attention throughout.”

“Brilliant techniques/concept. Well delivered.”

“Jane is very informative and encouraging. She has a lovely friendly manner and explained everything. This will dramatically enhance my life.”

“Excellent workshop with effective and surprising results by the end of it. Highly recommended. Thank you.”

“I don’t need the report to know what people felt, so many have been talking about it over the last few days with so many positive comments.”

“Wish I had this training a long time ago. Excellent trainer – thank you.”

“Excellent pace and style. Very useful information with relevant practical exercises.”

“It was good! It was fun!”

“Really helpful – lots of techniques to practice.”

“Didn’t know I could read that fast and retain knowledge.”

“Brilliant delivery with the day moving at the correct pace.”

# Word Smiths' training approach

Word Smiths training workshops will give your team an instant boost in several key areas where personal development leads to direct gains in efficiency and effectiveness.

All our training events are designed to be highly interactive, engaging and fun. Our learning approach is to involve participants through discussion, group/individual exercises, games and examples. This means that our workshops work best with a group of between 10 and 15 participants – although we can of course deliver the same content in a lecture hall or as one-to-one session. Whatever the nature of the training event, we always focus on giving the best tips and techniques for developing skills and improving performance.

## Workshop design

If you want an in-house event that addresses any specific concerns or needs, we can design a session that meets your own requirements. We can refocus an existing course/programme, or develop something completely new.

## Our values

Four key values guide our approach to learning design and training delivery:

1. **We are all learners.** Being able to put oneself in learners' shoes and see things from their point of view is a prerequisite of effective learning design and delivery.
2. **People are individuals.** The starting point is to understand learners and think about them as individuals, even when they are part of a group. By building on what they already know and working from the known to the unknown, we maximise their opportunities for effective learning.
3. **Motivation leads to improved performance.** This belief emphasises the need for regular effective feedback and positive reinforcement. What's also important is the fact that effective learning is not perceived as an end in itself, but as a powerful tool for achieving business success.
4. **Learning is an active process.** Although it may seem obvious, every process and each activity in a training event or programme must be designed so that people can learn. It's therefore vital to get people involved, make them think, gain their commitment and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning

## Course designer / presenter



All Word Smiths courses are designed and presented by Jane Smith, who has many years' experience of developing and running courses for universities and colleges, financial institutions, industry, government

departments, local authorities, NGOs and other public sector bodies. For a list of clients see [www.word-smiths.co.uk/clients.html](http://www.word-smiths.co.uk/clients.html).

Jane is also an author whose business books have been consistently high sellers for publishers including Hodder Headline, Kogan Page, Pearsons and Longmans. She also writes articles and features for a variety of publications, and is the author/co-author of a range of personal development audio books published by Word Smiths.

Jane Smith is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and holds a postgraduate qualification from the Institute in managing and delivering training.

## Speed Read Your Way to Success

Mounting work pressures, too little time, keeping your knowledge base up-to-date, checking out the competition: we all have to find a way of dealing with today's tidal wave of information. One highly effective solution is speed reading – a technique that's not just about reading fast, but about making your whole reading process more efficient.

### Is it for me?

This course is a must-have for anyone who wants to be able to deal with vast amounts of information quickly.

You need this training if you:

- Feel overwhelmed by the amount of reading you have to do
- Find it hard to pick out the important points in your reading
- Have difficulty in concentrating when you read
- Worry that you may miss some crucial information when you read.

If you practise the skills of reading faster with good comprehension, you will harness the huge reserve capacity of your mind – and you will be surprised at what you can achieve.

### Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- How to browse quickly and effectively
- Three techniques for gaining a brief overview of what you are reading
- Six skills which will improve your reading speed
- Exercises to help you read faster and understand more of what you've read
- Exercises for improving your eyesight and avoiding eyestrain
- Techniques for helping you to remember what you read
- How to select an appropriate reading approach
- A process for studying more effectively.



### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- What slows you down?
- Your reading baseline
- How the eyes work
- Six techniques for reading faster
- The high speed skim
- Exercises for relaxing the eyes and developing the vision

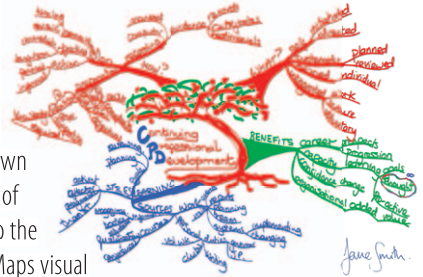
Lunch: 12.30

- Stretching speed and comprehension
- Styles of reading
- Note-taking and recall
- A process for studying effectively
- Tips for speed reading success
- Recap and review
- Planning the next steps

Close: 4.30 pm

# Mind Mapping for Memory and Creative Thinking

Mind Maps are powerful tools for absorbing information and organising large volumes of facts. The principal thought or idea is drawn in the centre, with major branches radiating outwards. Further levels of thought, expressed in terms of key words or images, are connected to the main branches with thinner lines. It's important to make your Mind Maps visual – because colour and images are a powerful means of expressing ideas. You'll also include key words and associations to trigger other thoughts, reinforce the memory and organise ideas.



Many people have found that Mind Mapping has revitalised their whole approach to thinking and note taking. But more than that, Mind Mapping is a tool for boosting confidence and personal growth.

## Is it for me?

This course is for anyone who wants to realise more of their potential for storing and recalling facts and ideas. Its aim is to help you to learn how to improve your memory and how to use Mind Maps for thinking and note-taking. If you continue to practice these techniques, your ability to grasp, analyse and recall facts and ideas will greatly improve. The learning is creative and fun. We hope you'll enjoy it – most people do.

## Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- Why so many people find it hard to think creatively and remember effectively
- How the mind works – and how to use this information to create Mind Maps
- How to read a Mind Map – identifying key features and characteristics
- The main laws of Mind Mapping
- The uses and benefits of Mind Maps
- How to use Mind Mapping for organising and recalling information
- How to use Mind Mapping for planning and creative thinking.

## Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Your problems and goals
- What is a Mind Map?
- How the mind and the memory work
- Using associations and imagination to construct a Mind Map

Lunch: 12.30

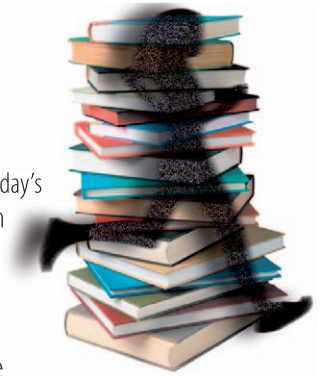
- Uses and benefits of Mind Mapping
- Memory principles and systems
- Using Mind Maps for improving the memory
- Transforming written or spoken material into a Mind Map
- Mind Mapping practice
- Planning the next steps

Close: 4.30 pm

# Managing Information Effectively with Mind Mapping and Speed Reading

Mind Mapping and speed reading are two highly effective ways of dealing with today's tidal wave of information. Mind Maps are powerful tools for absorbing information and organising large volumes of facts. Speed reading is a set of skills and approaches which will allow you to double or even triple your current reading speed – with good comprehension.

This combination course provides an opportunity to get to grips with both of these powerful techniques in a single day.



## Is it for me?

This course is for administrators, team members or managers who need tools for helping them to manage and use large quantities of information. The aim is to help you to read faster, understand, organise, analyse and recall what you have read. If you practice these skills you will harness the huge reserve capacity of your mind – and you will be surprised at what you can achieve.

## Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- How the mind works – and how to use this information to read faster and create Mind Maps
- The main laws of Mind Mapping
- The uses and benefits of Mind Maps
- How to browse quickly and effectively
- Six skills which will improve your reading speed
- Exercises to help you read faster and understand more of what you've read
- How to select an appropriate reading approach
- A process for studying more effectively.

## Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Introduction, goals and objectives
- What is a Mind Map?
- Using the brain's associative and imaginative powers
- Mind Mapping laws
- The principles of memory
- Mind Maps for thinking and remembering
- Mind Maps for creative problem solving

Lunch: 12.30

- Your reading baseline
- Barriers to effective reading
- Six techniques for reading faster
- The high speed skim
- Styles of reading
- Drills for stretching speed and comprehension
- A process for studying effectively

Close: 4.30 pm

## Making the Most of Your Memory

Every single thing we do or say involves memory. Our memories make us who we are, and the level of confidence we have in our mental powers is central to the way we approach life. Many people complain of having a poor memory. But in reality everyone has an infinite capacity to remember, if they only they knew how. In business, a trained memory can provide you with a priceless asset. If you learn to use it effectively, you can approach your work with confidence, communicate successfully, organise your time and carry out every task with purpose and creativity.

This course offers some steps you can take to make the most of your memory. With these skills and techniques, you will be able to remember everything that you need – names, facts, figures, lists and appointments.



### Is it for me?

This course is for anyone who wants to realise more of their potential for storing and recalling facts and ideas. Its aim is to help you to learn how to improve your memory and how to use Mind Maps for thinking and note-taking. If you continue to practise these techniques, your ability to grasp, analyse and recall facts and ideas will greatly improve. The learning is creative and fun. We hope you'll enjoy it – most people do.

### Benefits

During this course you will:

- Identify the reasons why your memory fails you
- Achieve a better understanding of how your memory works
- Appreciate how you can make the most of your natural ability
- Use Mind Mapping for organisation and recall
- Learn three techniques for remembering facts and figures
- Find out how to recall names and faces
- Practise learning and recalling large quantities of information in a short time.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Your problems and goals
- A memory audit
- How the mind and the memory work
- The memory principles
- How to construct a Mind Map for memory and learning

Lunch: 12.30

- Uses and benefits of Mind Mapping
- Memory principles and systems
- Tools and techniques for remembering facts and figures
- Memory rhythms
- Making the most of your fantastic memory
- Planning the next steps

Close: 4.30 pm

## Effective Business Writing

It's not just embarrassing when business writing is confusing, boring and infuriating. Poor written material also wastes valuable time, sends inaccurate messages and projects a negative image of both the writer and of her or his organisation.

Clear, succinct and compelling reports and letters are essential to effective communication, and being able to create them is a vital business skill. Fortunately, effective writing is not a gift that is granted to the elite few who happen to find it easy, but a competence that can be learned like any other.

The aim of this course to help you develop your skills, so that you can convey your message clearly and concisely in writing and make a positive impact on your reader.

### Is it for me?

This course is primarily designed for managers and team members who wish to boost their writing confidence and make sure that the documents they write get noticed and actioned.

However, it will also be of interest to anyone who wants to communicate their written ideas concisely and clearly.

### Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- How to recognise aspects of good writing style
- A proven process for writing effectively
- A technique and tips for planning and structuring any kind of document
- The seven secrets of writing for readability
- The most common grammatical errors – and how to avoid them
- How to review and proofread effectively
- Five tips that will ensure your documents stand out from the crowd.



### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Your problems and goals
- You are a reader too
- Consequences of sending out poor quality written communications
- A process for writing effectively
- Creating your message
- Planning, writing and reviewing written material
- Practical session

Lunch: 12.30

- Writing for readability
- Writing emails and letters
- Writing memos and minutes
- Report writing
- Practical session
- Writing that means business
- Planning the next steps

Close: 4.30 pm

## Effective Report Writing

Writing reports is one of the most demanding tasks that we undertake at work. It is both a complicated technical skill and a subtle creative activity. The problem is that few of us have learned the essentials of this kind of writing. The techniques that we were taught at school and university are not always appropriate at work. Reports are not the same as essays or dissertations; they are different kinds of documents and must be written differently. This one-day course sets out a step-by-step process for communicating clear messages to the people who need to read them.



### Who is it for?

This course is primarily designed for managers and team members who wish to boost their writing confidence and know that the documents they write will be noticed and actioned. However, it will also be of interest to anyone who wants to communicate their written ideas concisely and clearly.

### Learning approach

We deliver this course via a highly interactive programme which includes discussion, group/individual exercises, games and case studies. We normally ask participants to prepare for the training by thinking of an idea for a simple report that they can work up during the session.

### Benefits

During this course you will learn how to:

- Recognise aspects of good writing style and learn from the good and bad practices of others
- Identify the consequences of sending out poor quality writing to clients and colleagues
- Plan and structure reports for specific purposes
- Avoid common grammatical errors in your writing
- Produce a report which achieves its purpose and makes a positive impact on the reader
- Use proof reading and review techniques to spot errors and inconsistencies in written material.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- You are a reader too
- What is a report?
- Planning a report
- Practical session
- Writing your report, using plain English

Lunch: 12.30

- Avoiding common grammatical errors
- Practical session
- Reviewing your report
- Writing that means business
- Action plan and evaluation

Close: 4.30 pm

## Effective Minute Writing

The role of the minute taker carries a lot of responsibility – but usually very little support or credit. There seems to be an assumption that anyone can take minutes. But minute takers are often unsure what to write and meetings are often chaotic. There is much more involved in minute taking than the writing quickly – including active listening and the ability to summarise accurately.

This is a highly interactive programme delivered through discussion, group/individual exercises and case studies. We use video and audio recordings of meetings to give participants the best practice in taking and structuring notes.



### Is it for me?

This course is for administrators, team members, PAs or managers who have responsibility for taking notes during meetings and writing them up in the form of minutes. This task may form a central part of their job, or it may be something that they do infrequently.

The aim is to develop participants' confidence in taking notes and in producing minutes that effectively record discussions and decisions made during meetings. Our intention is to help participants to understand that taking minutes can be an opportunity to develop their skills and enhance their visibility in the organisation.

### Benefits

During this course you will:

- Identify the different reasons why you take minutes
- Explore how to make the task of minute taking as easy as possible
- Use different techniques for recording discussions and decisions during the meeting
- Learn techniques for structuring your notes effectively
- Learn how to write up the minutes in a form that satisfies the organisation's requirements and the needs of participants.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Minute taking problems
- Purposes of minutes
- Preparation for minute taking
- The agenda

Lunch: 12.30

- Note taking tools
- Styles of minutes
- Writing the minutes
- Review

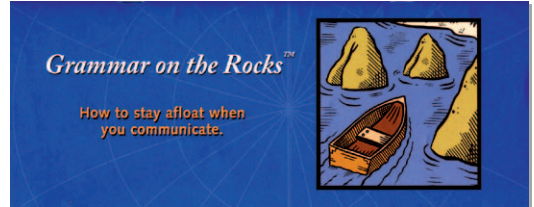
Close: 4.30 pm

## Grammar on the Rocks™

Good grammar is an essential element of effective writing. Your reader won't understand what you want unless your document is written in unambiguous, correct English.

In this half-day workshop, Jane Smith shows you how to recognise and steer clear of the 'rocks' of English grammar that can so easily scupper your credibility.

You do not need to become a serious grammarian. But you do need the confidence to avoid the main hazards of the language. Each participant receives a detailed booklet which acts both as a workbook during the session and as an easy-to-use reference after the course. The booklet includes a self-assessment, easy-to-use reference summaries and a recommended reading list.



### Is it for me?



Grammar on the Rocks™ is a vital training event for anyone who wants to make sure that the documents they write are clear and grammatically correct.

This course is designed for anyone who wishes to boost their writing confidence and be certain that the effectiveness of their communications is not undermined by poor grammar.

### Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- How to use the 'parts of speech' – the main building blocks of the language
- How to avoid the major rocks that will sink your career if you don't take steps to avoid them
- How to sail round the minor rocks that could capsize you if you don't watch out for them
- How to spot the submerged rocks that could unsettle your life chances if you don't watch out for them.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Your problems and goals
- Your starting point
- The building blocks of the language
- The major rocks – including apostrophes, plurals, subject-verb agreement
- The minor rocks – including colon, which/that, who/whom, I/me/myself
- The submerged rocks
- What have you learned?

Close: 1pm

## Proofreading

Even the most impressive document will have its credibility undermined by mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

This course teaches some useful proofreading strategies for quickly and effectively identifying and eliminating errors.

This is a highly interactive programme, delivered through discussion, group/individual exercises and examples.

### Is it for me?

This course is for anyone who would like to develop their proofreading skills.



Its aim is to help you develop your proofreading skills, so that you can convey your messages clearly and concisely in writing and make the appropriate impact on your readers.

### Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- The key things to look out for when proofreading
- A number of techniques for scanning documents when searching for errors
- How to review a document to ensure that its message is communicated unambiguously
- How to identify and rectify mistakes in written material.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Your problems and goals
- The importance of proofreading
- A process for proofreading
- Spotting mistakes: spelling, punctuation and grammar

Lunch: 12.30 pm

- What to check apart from the text: layout, house style etc
- Proofing on screen and on paper
- Processes for improving the effectiveness of proofing: using a ruler, working in pairs, reading aloud etc
- Looking for cuts and keeping the sense
- The final once-over

Close: 4.30 pm

## Business Planning Skills

An effective business plan ensures that everyone in the team or department is committed to the same goals and objectives. The process of drawing up a business plan gives an opportunity for business leaders to make an appraisal of the current situation, identify options for the future, set a strategic direction and communicate how these targets will be met.

The business plan also provides a framework for action and a yardstick against which to manage performance and measure progress.



### Is it for me?

This course is designed for managers and team members who wish to boost their business planning and writing skills and make sure that the plans they write get noticed and actioned. However, it will also be of interest to anyone who needs to contribute to the business planning process.



### Benefits

During this course you will learn:

- The key elements of a business plan
- How to carry out appropriate research
- How to create a costed business plan which identifies both the benefits of risks of a proposed action
- The features of a good business plan
- How to structure and write a good business case.

### Programme

Start: 9.30 am

- Welcome and introductions
- Your problems and goals
- What is a business plan?
- A process for creating a business plan
- Planning and research

Lunch: 12.30

- Identifying and managing risk
- Drafting a business plan
- Costing a business plan
- Proofreading and reviewing
- Planning the next steps

Close: 4.30 pm

## Costs

The total cost for a standard in-house / in-company training event consists of:

- a basic course fee
- a per delegate fee to cover course materials
- agreed trainer's expenses.

Any workshop can be given your organisation's specific focus so that it meets your own particular objectives.

Please contact us at [enquiries@word-smiths.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@word-smiths.co.uk) or on 01873 857556 for a quotation for an event or a series of events.





# About Word Smiths

Word Smiths is a small, independent partnership based in South-East Wales. We have been providing high quality, cost-effective training and learning programmes for a wide range of private and public sector clients for more than 20 years.

We write and produce custom learning packages, we run in-house and open workshops and we publish a series of audio books.

This small team works in partnership with clients and learners to respond efficiently to their requirements. Because we are specialists, we can create bespoke in-company solutions which address any area of written communication.

There is a full list of our clients at [www.word-smiths.co.uk/clients.html](http://www.word-smiths.co.uk/clients.html)



# Word Smiths audio books

Gathering, absorbing and communicating information are essential skills in this age of information overload. But, as work pressure increases, acquiring these skills is yet another burden. Now there's another way – one that makes it easy to learn. In the car, at the gym – or wherever suits you best – you can be absorbing tips and techniques from Word Smiths' *For Success...* series.

## Speed Reading for Success

This finely-crafted audio book is a simple solution for anyone who needs to deal with today's tidal wave of information in a fast, structured way. In simple steps that take just a few hours, this resource makes it fun to learn how to read more effectively. Find out for yourself why this 'little bit of genius' has been something of a cult hit for readers all over the world. ISBN 9780954886004

## Effective Business Writing for Success

Reports, emails, plans, minutes and presentations: business writers must write any of these, and write them well. Effective Business Writing for Success includes several components that will help you to create better documents: an audio CD packed with information on business writing, a booklet summarising key points, model documents, exercises and a bonus track on meeting minutes. This smart package will give you the skills to make a positive impact, no matter what you are writing. ISBN 9780954886035

## Memory and Learning for Success

This audio package is ideal for anyone who is concerned about their capacity to remember – especially in this age of information overload. By applying these skills, you'll be able to constantly perform at peak levels and regularly succeed in areas that once seemed impossible. You will gain tremendous benefits from training your memory, no matter what your age or circumstances. ISBN 9780954886028

## Coaching and Mentoring for Success

This neat audio/online resource is a quick way for coaches and mentors to learn the basics they need to do their jobs professionally. The package allows you to choose how to learn. You can listen to the CDs, do the exercises, read the transcript or study the online resources. If you want to become a more able coach/mentor, or you want to help your team members to develop their skills, you won't find anything better than this 'masterpiece of blended learning'. ISBN 9780954886011

**More details about these titles at [www.word-smiths.co.uk/audio-books.html](http://www.word-smiths.co.uk/audio-books.html)  
Available from Audible, Amazon and other sellers.**

