

# Persuasive Matters

## The 2021 Programs

- **10 Tips for Clear and Direct Legal Writing.** This seminar features 10 tips to make your legal writing, regardless of context or audience, clear and concise. Ben uses both good and not-so-good examples from inside and outside the legal world in this interactive seminar. This is the signature Persuasive Matters program. You'll apply what you learn here to any type of writing.
  - Be Attractive: Document Design
  - Be a Good Host: The Importance of Context
  - Be Calm: Understatement and Simplicity
  - Be Brief: Concision
  - Be Strong: Powerful Nouns and Verbs
  - Be Emphatic: Avoiding Cheap Keystrokes
  - Be Stylish: Sentence Variety
  - Be Orderly: Logical Organization
  - Be Musical: Writing that Sounds Good
  - Be Careful: Proofreading Techniques

- **Writing to Capture Clients.** There are two kinds of writing: captive and non-captive. Captive writing is for the court, who is required to read it. Non-captive writing is different: reading is optional. No one has to read it. These are your business development pieces like blog posts, client alerts, and articles. If you don't grab your readers immediately—in the first paragraph, usually—and if you don't explain why the topic is even relevant to them, they'll exercise that option and stop reading. And they won't come back.

The problem with non-captive legal writing is that too often it looks like captive writing. Who wants to read an article that looks like a brief? In this interactive seminar, Ben Opipari will teach you how to craft business development pieces with attention-getting introductions and engaging writing that caters to the needs of your readers.

- **Revision: The Final Touch in Legal Writing.** Effective revision of work product is more than a quick final read-through for mistakes. That's why the best revision is *re-vision*: a new way to look at the document. Re-vision consists of three stages. You start with the big picture issues like structure and organization, move to the sentences, then finish with the words and the typos. In this hands-on seminar, you'll learn the techniques of effective revision, then apply them to writing samples to create a polished product.
- **Telling a Persuasive Story.** The statement of facts is one of the most important parts of your brief, creating a dominant first impression. But it also advances your argument: it's subtly persuasive, and a good one pulls the reader to your position. Bad fact sections, on the other hand, leave the reader indifferent or even unsure as to whom they should be rooting for. Using sample fact sections and selections from the media, Ben uses conventional narrative theory and the power of story to show you how to write facts that both state and persuade.

- **Trimming the Fat in Your Writing.** Verbose writers create a confused (at best) or adversarial (at worst) audience through their long-winded writing. No one should have to read a sentence more than once, and this seminar will show you how to shed those words and make your writing concise by trimming the fat from your sentences. The result: lean and muscular ideas.
- **Getting the Best Writing from Your Team: Delivering Effective Feedback to Attorneys.** This seminar teaches partners and other team leaders how to give relevant feedback to attorneys on individual work product to help them become better writers. While red lining an associate's work product may be a time-saver in the short run, it's a time-waster in the long run if the attorney repeats the mistakes. A meeting that delivers constructive criticism once is a much better use of time than repeated sessions of red-lining, and in this seminar Ben shows partners how to coach attorneys and deliver effective feedback. Ben draws upon his experience as a legal writing coach for ten years and as director of two university writing centers in this popular program.
- **Complicated Ideas, Simple Explanations.** When we explain a concept from our area of expertise, it's easy to forget that our readers don't share our knowledge. The result? A confused and frustrated reader who sees nothing but jargon and convoluted phrases. Good writers explain a topic in a manner that anyone can understand. As one judge recently said, "A Martian should be able to drop down from the sky, read your document cold, and still understand it." Join Ben in this interactive seminar as he teaches you how to explain even the most complicated topic in a simple manner that anyone—even Martians—can understand. This is a great course for your IP attorneys.
- **Jettison Your Jargon: Concise Law Firm Emails.** "I'm going to spend my day binge reading emails!" said no one ever. You spend a good part of your day writing emails. Which means someone else spends a good part of *their* day reading them. In this 60 minute seminar, you'll learn how make your emails more concise and more readable. And less horrible.
- **Punctuation Matters.** Bad punctuation diminishes your credibility and prevents the smooth flow of ideas. Even worse, your message can be misinterpreted or unintelligible. Proper punctuation, however, effectively guides readers through your message, never getting in the way while leading them to your conclusion. This is an engaging tour through both the proper use of punctuation and the stylistic conventions for its use.