

NEWS FROM NEW VENTURE PUBLISHING

BOOK LAUNCH: *HOW TO WRITE WELL AT WORK*

- **WHY IS THERE SO MUCH BAD BUSINESS WRITING?**
- **12 MILLION EMPLOYEES HAVE LITERACY SKILLS OF 11-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN – OR WORSE**
- **PROBLEM POSES TRAINING CHALLENGE FOR HR PROFESSIONALS**

A new book pins the blame for bad business writing on the fact that British companies employ 12 million people with English language skills no better than 11-year-old children.

“It’s no wonder customers get exasperated with baffling letters, jargon-filled reports and illiterate e-mails,” says Peter Bartram, author of *How to Write Well at Work*.

“At the very time more organisations realise they need to improve the quality of their writing, they find that not enough employees have the skills to do so,” Mr Bartram writes in the book. The problem poses a huge training challenge for HR professionals.

Mr Bartram says that writing at work is more difficult than ever because conventions about workplace writing, such as the formal structure of business letters, have broken down. In addition, workplace writers must avoid sexism, racism and ageism. And they must navigate round the problems created by “political correctness”.

Mr Bartram points out that some of the difficulties with workplace writing occur because mobile phone texting and e-mails have closed the gap between spoken vernacular and formal written English.

He argues that written English lies at the heart of business in documents such as contracts, letters of employment or customer proposals. "As a result, those employees who succeed in raising their writing game also enhance their career prospects," he adds.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. *How to Write Well at Work: Simple steps to get you writing with fluency and confidence* by Peter Bartram is published by New Venture Publishing at £12.95. ISBN: 978-0-9552336-2-3. Paperback, 191 pages.
2. The first chapter of the book is available to read free online at www.writewellatwork.co.uk
3. The figure of 12 million employees with literacy skills at "level 1" - equivalent to 11-year-olds/GCSE grades D-G or lower - comes from House of Commons' Committee of Public Accounts report *Skills for Life: Improving adult literacy and numeracy* (HC 792), page 14, paragraph 10. (Published 24 January 2006).
4. Peter Bartram is able to write a free article for your publication about the importance of good business writing or any of the specific issues mentioned in the book. Go to the weblink above to see a detailed list of contents.
5. A picture of Peter Bartram and the cover of *How to Write Well at Work* are available from peter.bartram@journalist.co.uk
6. For further information and review copies: call Peter Bartram on 01273 565505.