

# Improving Legal Drafting Skills in English for In-house Lawyers



## Background

Inter Ikea is the owner and worldwide franchisor of the Ikea concept. It manages the negotiation, sale and ongoing monitoring of Ikea franchises worldwide. Inter IKEA Systems B.V. is constantly seeking market expansion and grants new franchises to markets/territories according to a detailed expansion plan. 2006 alone saw new openings in locations as diverse as Chengdu, China and Novgorod, Russia.

Based in Brussels, Inter Ikea's in-house legal team is involved in the entire franchising process from the initial due diligence of potential franchisors to the drafting of final franchise agreements.

In order to avoid any ambiguity in the negotiation and final writing of agreements on such a global scale, the in-house counsel team requires complete autonomy in drafting documents with complex legal English terms. Inter Ikea selected Communicaid to provide a number of legal English training solutions designed to equip core members of the legal team with an up-to-date knowledge of legal English drafting and terminology.

## Training Objectives

The key requirements of the training were to:

- Understand the nuances of contractual terms used in agreements drafted in English under diverse jurisdictions
- Raise awareness of 'Plain English' writing style and current best practice in drafting international agreements
- Equip legal assistants with sufficient understanding of the legal context of Ikea's franchising process
- Provide Ikea lawyers with the long-term language tools necessary for their future career

## Challenges

The main challenges were seen as:

- Adapting the content of Communicaid's open group legal English programmes to the individual needs of the participants from Ikea
- Incorporating international best practice drafting styles while maintaining the integrity of the Ikea style of agreement

## Training Approach

Communicaid offers a number of open group programmes in the field of specialist Legal English. The relevant members of the in-house legal team were interviewed and assessed and the appropriate programmes were recommended and adapted.

All training was delivered by Communicaid's dual-qualified legal English trainers, who are both expert language trainers and experienced international commercial lawyers.



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### Proposed Solutions

- A three day “Drafting Contracts in English” programme allowed employees to gain a comprehensive understanding of the principles of legal drafting in English
- Follow-up sessions on a more wide-ranging “English for Lawyers” programmes allowed participants to consolidate their drafting skills and fine-tune their spoken fluency
- Legal assistants attended a specialist “Legal English for Legal Secretaries” programme with the aim of obtaining a substantive knowledge of the legal framework for international franchise agreements

### Client Feedback

“I greatly enjoyed the Legal English course provided by Communicaid and have already started to see an impact in my work.”

In-house Counsel  
Inter Ikea

### Results

Participants now incorporate best practice into their everyday legal work and are more confident in using complex English legal terminology. Time is saved through quicker and more effective drafting, with senior staff required to spend less time reviewing and editing documents.

### Contact Details

For more information about how Communicaid can assist you and your organisation, please contact our Business Development team:

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