



## Competent Technical Communication

Communicate Your Best in Any Situation

Whether you're talking one on one or in a group presentation, speaking with confidence will impress, persuade and open more doors than you can imagine. This course focuses on three areas of communication required for personal success at work: presentation development and delivery, interpersonal communication (one-on-one) and communication in group settings, such as meetings. Several modules are dedicated toward helping you to find your next career opportunity including resume writing, interviewing tips and techniques, networking, the art of follow up, and how to use social media to promote your skills and image.

This course emphasizes the importance of planning communication events or meetings as well as follow-through and accountability. Throughout the course, students will have an opportunity to apply tools and techniques in small and whole group practices (including video feedback). Students will learn and practice techniques for a variety of meeting objectives (gather information, share information, problem solving, sales, etc.). These will be applied in a variety of listening and feedback venues.

- During the initial session, students will have an opportunity to identify and prioritize areas of interest and need, translating them into individualized course objectives for formal presentations to impromptu meetings.
- The first primary focus area will be interpersonal communication skills. Students will learn and practice planning, execution and follow-through techniques for excellent one-on-one communication events, including telephone and face-to-face interviews.
- The second area focuses on meeting skills, since much of our time at work is spent with groups of people in meeting-settings. Students will develop skills in meeting planning and preparation, agenda planning, process planning, meeting facilitation and meeting follow-up.



## Course Syllabus

### I IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

<b>Course:</b>	Competent Technical Communication	
<b>Prerequisite:</b>	None	
<b>Time Frame:</b>	40 total contact hours	
<b>Instructors:</b>	Cindy Miller BA Communication Arts & Sciences President, C. Miller & Associates 23 years managing corporate functions	Steve Alessandri BA Economics and Marketing Vice President, CPS 18 years of technical staffing
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### II REFERENCE MATERIALS

1. The Hard Truth About Soft Skill, by Peggy Klaus
2. How to Make Meetings Work by Michael Doyle & David Straus
3. The Exceptional Presenter, by Timothy J. Koegel
4. Presentation S.O.S.: From Perspiration to Persuasion in 9 Easy Steps by Mark Wiskup
5. Get Hired Fast! Tap the Hidden Job Market in 15 Days, by Brian Graham

### III COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Identify & prioritize individual participants' needs relative to communication and interaction goals and demonstrated capability.
2. Learn the components of basic interpersonal communication events from planning through follow-up.
3. Understand how to value and use the perspective of the other person as a starting point in communication.
4. Gain an advantage by learning and mastering a variety of tools and techniques to improve interpersonal communication and public speaking/presentation skills.
5. Learn to effectively communicate during interviews and respond to tough questions.
6. Develop a personal marketing plan for yourself and your career search.
7. Learn how to uncover unpublished job opportunities.
8. Understand how to leverage social media to promote networking and your job search.
9. Learn to design agendas, plan outcomes & implement decisions.
10. Learn to plan/prepare for the physical meeting environment and logistics to maximize meeting outcomes.
11. Learn how to manage multiple perspectives and personalities in any meeting situation.
12. Ability to plan and execute productive one-on-one and group communication events.



#### **IV      METHODOLOGY**

This course is highly interactive with lecture, augmented by frequent individual planning and small group exercises and practice. In order for participants to improve communication, they will need to learn some of the basic elements, tools and techniques and then practice, practice, practice. There should be ample time in class to work on assignments. Students will work individually and together for various assignments with an emphasis on peer feedback on in-class projects.

##### **Lectures**

Lectures will be supported by material from referenced books and from instructor's workbook material. The purpose of lectures will be to enable participants to discuss, challenge and practice various tools and techniques rather than to simply memorize various concepts. A PDF file of the lecture material will be provided for the student's personal use as reference material.

##### **Specific Industry Examples**

Since all of us have been in thousands of interactions with another person and in meetings, there will be no shortage of examples and "life experience" to support learning. Examples of successful agendas (both interpersonal and for meetings) in order to accomplish specific objectives will be presented and discussed.

##### **In-Class Assignments**

Assignments for this class will be mostly individual work or with partners and small groups, followed by discussion and feedback with peers.

##### **Specific Personal Application**

Participants who use this course as a skill-development workshop will have access to a variety of tools and techniques that can be used everyday and in every interaction with others. The part of the course focused on meetings and making presentations will obviously be more applicable in more formal and larger group settings, but will apply to situations outside of work including school, church, community or any other event that requires bringing people together to achieve an objective.



## V COURSE OUTLINE & ASSIGNMENTS

### **Module 1 – Setting the Foundation – Interpersonal Communication**

Course Introduction / Instructor Introduction	Discussion & Ice-Breaker
Course Overview & Logistics	PowerPoint Lecture
Participant Objectives	I-Time; Flip-Chart
Typical Interpersonal Business Interactions (unplanned)	Exercise
The Dirty Dozen of Communication Spoilers	PowerPoint Lecture
The Basic Components of Every Communication Event	PowerPoint Lecture
The Basic Components	Exercise
The Value of Planning and the WIIFM Factor	PowerPoint Lecture
The WIIFM Factor	Exercise
The Power of Collecting Information (before, not after)	PowerPoint Lecture
Hot Buttons (for me and you)	Lecture & Exercise
Listening Skills– Tools & Techniques	Lecture & Exercise
Asking Questions – Tools & Techniques	Lecture & Exercise
When It’s Wise Not to Talk at All	PowerPoint Lecture
Your Most Challenging Interpersonal Communication	Exercise & Videotape

### **Module 2 – Presentation Development & Delivery**

Essentials of all successful presentations	Lecture
Understand and connect with your audience	Lecture
Practice so that your skills do not fail under pressure	Exercise & Videotape
Work with PowerPoint and other media during your	Lecture & Exercise
Techniques for delivering a clear and compelling message	Lecture & Exercise
Facilitating the Q&A period	Lecture & Exercise
The Exceptional Presenter	Videotape

### **Module 3 – Get Hired**

Identifying Opportunities (published and unpublished)	PowerPoint Lecture
Resume Types	Lecture & Exercise
Common Sense Guidelines for Writing Effective Letters	Lecture & Exercise
Getting the Best from Recruiters	PowerPoint Lecture
Networking Online and Face to Face	Lecture & Exercise
Using Social Media to Enhance Your Image	Lecture & Exercise
Develop a Personal Marketing Plan and Calendar	Lecture & Exercise



#### **Module 4 - Interviewing**

Get Past the Telephone Screen for a Face-to-Face Interview  
Steps Before the Interview  
Preparing for the Tough Questions  
Show Your Best Self – Nonverbal Communication  
Your Fortune is in Your Follow Up

Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture  
Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise

#### **Module 5 – Meeting Facilitation**

Course Introduction & Overview  
Participant Objectives  
Using Your Own ‘Recording’ to Observe/Learn  
Facilitator/Recorder/Time Keeper/Leader  
Problems in Meetings – Activity #1  
Content/Process/Context of Meetings  
Leadership & Stakeholder Analysis  
Types of Meetings: The Purpose Statement  
Agenda Planning: The Agenda Sandwich  
Topic/Process/Outcome/Who/Time  
Plan a Meeting – Part I  
Meeting Psychology 101  
Problem Situations – Small Group Practice  
Interventions & Preventions  
Meeting Planning – Physical Logistics  
Agenda Planning Formats  
Plan a Meeting – Part II  
Decision Making Spectrum & Exercise  
Problem Solving Meetings - Methods

Discussion & Lecture  
I-Time; Flip-Chart  
Discussion  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Demonstration  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Exercise - Self or w/ Partner  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Exercise  
Lecture & Demonstration  
PowerPoint Lecture  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Exercise – Self or w/ Partner  
Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise

#### **Module 6 – Meeting Facilitation – Focus: Application**

Problem Solving Meetings – Methods  
Meetings within a Project – Accordion Planning  
Meeting Planning/Process/Execution Tools  
Present Detailed Agendas  
First 10 Minutes of Your Meeting  
Wrap-up; Review Personal Course Objectives

Lecture & Exercise  
Lecture & Exercise  
PowerPoint Lecture  
Whole Group Feedback  
Small Group Exercise  
Flip Chart; Discussion