

General Syllabus for

Management 180 – Business Communication Syllabus

Required Texts

O'Hair, D., Friedrich, G.W., & Dixon, L.D. (2005). *Strategic Communication in Business and the Professions* (5th Ed.) Boston; Houghton Mifflin.

Bailey, E.P. (2005). *Writing and Speaking at Work*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice-Hall.

Course Approach and Objectives

“If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings--nor lose the common touch,”
--*Rudyard Kipling*

Although I was required to memorize and publicly recite Kipling's timeless poem “If,” at the age of ten, the excerpted couplet above is one that fueled my interest in mastering the art of communication as an indispensable tool of professional leadership. Kipling's words provided a metric with which to measure the purpose and promise of my own attempts to become an effective communicator. The ability to articulate precisely, factually, and, truthfully using a variety of symbols and media, is perhaps the most powerful challenge for the aspiring professional.

A survey of Business Communication courses exposes the many approaches designed to facilitate mastery of the art of professional communication. Some focus on a set of “Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.” Knowledge of theoretical aspects include: Organizational Theory, Intercultural and Multi-cultural awareness, Group and One-to-one Dynamics, Verbal and Non-verbal Communication, Persuasion, Rhetoric and Style, Business Etiquette, and, Technology. Analytical outcomes include an understanding of structure and composition with an aim of accessing information and improving comprehension. Writing outcomes include the ability to compose résumés, business letters, memos, reports, proposals and emails with appropriate style and grammar. Verbal outcomes include the ability to Introduce, Speak Persuasively, Speak Publicly, Interview (and be interviewed), Listen Actively, and, Conduct Meetings.

Approaches to facilitating mastery of these skills include: Self-Assessment, Lecture, Case Study, Constructivist Learning, Peer Coaching, Objective Behavioral Feedback, Group projects, Research, Group work, Individual work, Public Speaking, and Class participation.

Management 180 requires the added challenge of weaving contextualized communications inherent to the field of Accounting within the overall learning tapestry. The constraints of the ten-week quarter system, coupled with the amount of information that could potentially be presented, as well as, the practicum required of each student, often result in a less than meaningful understanding of theory, and, a less than competent demonstration of practical application.

This course proposes a “two-railed-process” approach with an emphasis on practicum (analysis and comprehension, writing, writing, writing, speaking, speaking and more speaking). Discussion, guided peer-coaching, structured, results-oriented assignments, case studies, Portfolios, and guest speakers will be used to achieve the outcomes noted above. Students will learn how to utilize text and other references to access information very quickly. Classroom discussion and activities will guide the student through the logical process of using the correct tools necessary to securing a position (job description, cover letter, resume, interview) as well as some of the more challenging forms of writing and communication scenarios that the professional is likely to encounter (reports, memoranda, counseling memoranda, verbal counseling, meetings). This approach should allow the class to explore the theoretical aspects of the process in a more organic context with concrete result-oriented outcomes.

The second “rail” includes the Term Assignment. Students will work in groups to research and report on one of a number of assigned issues relevant to the field of Accounting, or, of a closely-related field. Groups will prepare a position paper and a written strategy for communication that aids the process-flow. Groups will be expected to speak knowledgeably about their written work, and about the process. Students will be expected to use new tools to communicate effectively within their groups. The instructor will establish appropriate benchmarks for guiding this process.

The course objectives are that each student be able to demonstrate skill in accessing information, conceptualizing and preparing written and verbal outcomes sufficient to more effectively understand their environment and its relationships, and to be able to articulate relevant and meaningful understanding within their professional lives.

Attendance: Attendance to all classes is mandatory. Unavoidable absences may be excused by providing a written request and explanation via email.

Course Assignments: (See Course Schedule)

Assignments will include three writing exercises, and at least two presentation exercises. All students are expected to contribute to class discussions and may be called upon to share their insights. There will be two unscheduled quizzes and one Term Assignment that includes two team presentations.

The Term Assignment/Presentation.

Groups will be assigned to research relevant policy issue that are of concern to the field of Accounting or to that of a closely-related field. Group papers/presentations will have strict guidelines for process, and for grading purposes. The term assignment will be ongoing with established benchmarks including:

1. Analysis, Impact, and presentation of the issue
 - Position (Pro/Con) Impact.
 - Oral Defense of Position.
2. Strategy for communication flow change or support (Who needs to be contacted, what needs to be communicated, to whom, when, and, through which medium.)
 - Organizational Flow
 - Process Flow
 - Assessment (Tracking, Journaling, Written Reporting)
3. Oral Report on the PROCESS

Grading:

Final grades for the course will be based on performance on the following activities:

Term Assignment: Strategy for Change or Support	50 point/team
Term Assignment: Issue Analysis and Impact	50 point/team
Term Assignments: Oral Presentation	50 point/team
Writing Assignment #1	20 points
Writing Assignment #2	20 points
Writing Assignment #3	20 points
Class Participation	20 points
Quiz One	20 points
Quiz Two	20 points
Unexcused Absences	-10 points/per absence.
Total Points	270 Points

Management 180—Business Communication Proposed Schedule Winter Quarter 2006

Week	Date	Activity	Readings	Assignment
1		Housekeeping. Course Introduction Lecture/Discussion: Accessing & Dissecting Information. The Process of Communicating.		Complete Self Assessment. Read Strategic Communications: Chapters 1, 2.
2		Review Lecture/Discussion: Accessing and Understanding Information QUICKLY. Class Exercise: Dissecting Text: Using Structure to understand logical flow, concept development, and meaning.	Strategic Communications: Chapters 1, 2,	Locate a bona-fide Job Description. Writing Exercise 1.
3		Review Class Discussion Exercise The Job Description. The Resume The Cover letter.	Baily--Chapter 11.	Writing Exercise 2 The Job Description. The Resume The Cover letter.
4		QUIZ 1 Review Lecture: The INTERVIEW!!!!!! Pos. Guest Lecture: Auditor for Disney / CPA. Class Exercise: The Interview:	Strategic Communications: Chapters 8, 9.	Writing Exercise 3
5		Review Lecture/Discussion: Supervision/Management/Leadership: Writing the Hard Stuff. Memo's, Counseling Memo's, Written Responses to Memo's	Strategic Communications: Chap 3, 4, 6	Part 1 of Term Assignment Due.
6		Review Lecture/Discussion: Presentations. Term Assignment, Oral Presentations. Analysis, Impact, and presentation of the issue. Position (Pro/Con) Impact.	Strategic Communications: Chap 13, 14	Oral Presentations
7		Verbal vs. Non-verbal Communication. One-One, Group, Formal Presentations Remaining Term Assignment, Oral Presentations. Analysis, Impact, and presentation of the issue. Position (Pro/Con) Impact.	Strategic Communications: Chap 5,7	Oral Presentation

Management 180—Business Communication Proposed Schedule Winter Quarter 2006 (cont.)

Week	Date	Activity	Readings	Assignment
8		Lecture/Discussion: Interpersonal Communication. Group Communication. Communicating Across Cultures Class Activity: Term Assignment, Oral Presentations. Strateg	Strategic Communications: Chap 4,6	Part II of Term Assignment Due. Oral Presentations
9		QUIZ 2 Class Activity: Term Assignment, Oral Presentations. Strategy for Change	Strategic Communications: Chap 15	Oral Presentations
10		Oral Reports on the PROCESS Wrap-up	Strategic Communications: Chap 12	Final Draft of Term Assignment Due. Oral Presentations
11		Final Exam		