

Content outline

Communication



Communication

Overview

This course provides participants with an overview of the communication process and emphasizes the nature, elements and processes of written, oral and electronic communication within the construction industry.

Prerequisite

Although there is no formal educational prerequisite for this course, the participants' chances of success will be enhanced if their reading and comprehension skills are at a high school or equivalent level. Participants must be familiar with basic computer operating and word processing programs.

As well, participants should have previously acquired basic computer competencies.

Learning objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- explain the key elements of good written communication skills;
- identify and improve oral communication skills;
- identify interpersonal communication skills;
- prepare construction related documents;
- apply appropriate computer tools to improve communication skills;
- perform independent research.

Content

1. Explain the key elements of good written communication skills.

- importance of using proper grammar and spelling in written communication
- importance of writing clearly and concisely
- resource material (dictionaries, spellcheckers, grammar checkers, internet)
- key elements in a business letter
- key elements in a memorandum
- key elements in construction related reports
- key elements in minutes of meeting
- key elements in a job diary (electronic or otherwise)
- key elements of an e-mail message

2. Identify and improve oral communication skills.

- elements in communication (sender, receiver, method, and message)
- types of oral communication (formal and informal setting)
- public speaking techniques
- listening techniques



- barriers (sender, content, environment, listener)
- verbal and non-verbal communication
- techniques for improving verbal communication (repetition, tell back, feedback, follow up)

3. Identify interpersonal communication skills.

- primary reception skills (listening, observing, getting feedback, tell back)
- techniques of effective observation in interpersonal and group situations
- conducting meetings
- negotiation skills
- dealing with difficult people
- giving and receiving instructions

4. Prepare construction-related documents.

- job progress reports
- agenda and minutes of meeting
- job diary or journal
- letters and memoranda
- photographs

5. Apply appropriate computer tools to improve communication skills.

- computer tools and software identification
- basic features of word processing software
- basic features of spreadsheet software
- access and management of electronic information (file transfer, e-mail, Internet, Intranet, electronic bulletin boards, project management software)
- digital imagery

6. Perform independent research.

- electronic
- products
- product literature
- supplies
- historical database
- interviews
- questionnaires
- journals
- research papers



- trade publications
- suppliers
- conferences and trade shows

Methodology

This course lends itself to role-playing exercises for objectives two and three, while practical projects, lectures and demonstrations are appropriate for the remaining objectives. Instructors may involve the participants in the following specific techniques and activities:

- icebreaker type activity to get students engaged as soon as possible;
- demonstrations (i.e., how to use Internet, word-processing and presentation software);
- video taping oral presentations;
- having participants engage in one-on-one verbal communication exercises to demonstrate listening and verbal communication techniques;
- having participants conduct a meeting including:
 - o preparation of the notice of meeting,
 - o preparation of the agenda,
 - o preparation of the minutes,
- having participants keep a diary of their classroom training events;
- identifying information available on the Internet;
- preparing a questionnaire / interview.

Assessment

In order to successfully complete this course, participants will be expected to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning objectives. They will be evaluated through various assignments, projects, and/or tests based on each of these objectives. Final assessment for the course will be determined by the following weighting:

Learning objective	Weight (%)
1. Explain the importance of good written communication skills	15
2. Identify and improve oral communication skills	20
3. Identify interpersonal communication skills	20
4. Prepare construction related documents	20
5. Apply appropriate computer tools to improve communication skills	15
6. Perform independent research	10
	100



Resources

Reports, manuals, textbooks and documents

A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), PMI Standards Committee, Project Management Institute, [ISBN: 1-880410-12-5 (pbk. : alk. paper) / ISBN: 1-880410-13-3 (hdbk)]

Communicating in the Workplace, Francis Dombeck, Margaret S. Camp & M Satterwhite, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, ISBN: 0-07-560535-X

Essentials of Business Communication, Mary Ellen Guffrey & Brendan Hagle, Nelson Thompson Learning, ISBN: 0-17-622325-8

Means Forms for Contractors, R.S. Means Company, Inc., ISBN: 0-87629-214-7

PMP Exam: Practice Test and Study Guide, ESI International, ISBN: 1-890367-11-7

PMP ©: Project Management Professional Study Guide, SYBEX Inc., ISBN: 0-7821-4106-4

Government/association websites

Toastmasters International toastmasters.org

Other resources

Construction newspapers

Grammar check website grammarcheck.com

