

SYLLABUS
Communication for Managers
22-BA-711-501 • Fall 2009
Wednesdays • Sept 23-Oct 21 • 6:00-9:30pm

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Text

- *Communication for Managers: Professional Writing and Speaking*
- Harvard Business School case study
- Recommended but not required: Diana Hacker. *A Writer's Reference* (Boston: Bedford Books, 2004)

Objectives

- increased skill and confidence in business-based presentation
- proficiency in writing for business (emphasis on *for business*)
- a polished public persona that will enhance your ability to obtain influence and to be more productive in teams

Goals

- a strong grasp of the communicative resources critical to successful business practice
- a reflective, analytical approach to the dynamics and challenges of interpersonal discourse in business

Why this is a required course

The competency you will acquire in your major or concentration cannot realize its maximum potential without an accompanying skill level in business/public communication. In both national and local surveys, managers who recruit MBAs consistently cite inadequate professional writing and speaking as the most common shortcomings in new hires. Strong communication proficiency produces positive perception; together with credentials and experience, communication skills lead to sponsorship - the critical ingredient for success.

Grading

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| ▪ writing | 30% | (3 papers, 10%, 10%, 10%) |
| ▪ speaking | 40% | (2 presentations, 20% each) |
| ▪ teamwork | 20% | (team presentation) |
| ▪ interpersonal | 10% | (see criteria below) |

Interpersonal expectations

Professional communication is a central element of this class; because a professional persona is a decisive factor in career success, it is assigned grade weight for this course. In this context, the essentials of professional conduct include: compliance, listening, positive demeanor and attitude, in-class contribution, and staying in touch regarding absence and lateness.

Interpersonal skills

Success in business is greatly dependent on how you are perceived by others. These perceptions go far beyond excellence in public speaking and writing for business. The participation standards listed below reflect solid business practice and professional-level interpersonal skills.

- arrive on time
- provide advance notice when you cannot attend class
- be prepared for the session's agenda
- participate actively: listen, ask questions, offer observations
- provide useful feedback to your peers
- accept feedback from others in a collegial spirit
- be sensitive to difference and the shortcomings of others

Incompletes

A grade of Incomplete must be corrected no later than the following quarter.

Feedback

To make this course as productive for each of you, and to make the learning environment open and relaxed, I encourage you to contact me with any concerns, to seek clarification, or to suggest modifications that you feel might enhance the learning experience, either for your class or for future classes.

A final word

Studies show that attitude - not IQ or economic status - is the single greatest predictor of success. As in many other arenas, your positive spirit will help you succeed in this class. Success in this class has proven to be a powerful predictor of success, both in the MBA program as well as in the business world.

Knowledge is power. - Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

Agenda Summary

(see Blackboard Assignments for full description of each session)

Session 1 - September 23

- Overview of course philosophy and logistics
- Presentation skills
- Expectations for business writing
- Class exercise
- Autobiographical talk

Session 2 - September 30

- My World
- Global IQ
- Writing an executive summary
- Paper #1 due
- Presentation #1

Session 3 - October 7

- My World
- Feedback on writing
- Workplace role play scenarios
- Paper #2 due

Session 4 - October 14

- My World
- Dynamics of Teams
- Paper #3 due
- Presentation #2
- Team meetings

Session 5 - October 21

- My World
- Team Presentations
- Course evaluation