Effective Communication Skills

for Project Managers, Engineers & other Technical Professionals

This 2-day practical and interactive workshop helps participants maximize the effectiveness of their projects and programs by learning how to successfully communicate with both own Senior Execs and Customers

16 PDUs

Presented by Rick Graham PhD, PMP

Workshop Focus:

Understand the principles of effective communication

Assess how you communicate and what the skill gaps are; then practice to improve

Design effective "elevator-pitch" powerful and concise message delivery and practice with peers

Learn how to and how not to present status reports and other key project milestones

Maximize the effectiveness of your interaction with customers in face-to-face meetings

KTC International
Success through Competitive Intelligence

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Overview

In todays' project-driven, complex and global business environment, successful companies have realized that project-based teams spanning networks across functional, global, and seniority divides are required if they are to meet ever increasing challenges of delivering high complexity projects on time and in a competitive environment.

Whereas once technical skills were sufficient, recent reports have highlighted communication and presentation skills, as one of the biggest skills gap experienced by today's project teams.

This workshop is designed to address just that gap, and provides participants with not only solid knowledge, but practical tools, techniques and skills that they can use immediately.

Objectives and Style

The objective of the workshop is to provide participants not only with an awareness of the importance of excellent communication skills in business, but also to give them proven and practical tools to do this.

This workshop runs as sequences of presentations, discussions, role-play exercises and debriefs

Delivery Method

A number of different types of exercises is used throughout the training course:

1. Team discussion and brainstorming: for example, produce a list of what you don't you know about your customer, but should know before a meeting.

2. Case Studies: Simple but realistic case studies (based on client examples) with scenarios – team discussion of what would you do in given situations (for example, client is pushing you to do something unreasonable, even unethical).

3. Demonstrations: For example, in teams produce 2 short role plays for the rest of the group about how you would deal with a particular situation (for example, telling a customer that something isn't possible; presenting bad news to management; negotiating a solution internally). Show the wrong way to do it, then the right way to do it.
    (This works very well indeed in showing the effectiveness of planning and application of communication techniques, as participants soon realize that what they have identified as the wrong way to communicate something is often the way they normally do it - and is very funny usually!)

4. Presentations: During the workshop we learn some powerful presentation methods (not the PowerPoint bit (!) – we concentrate on how to communicate a powerful compelling message). Participants get a chance to practice this.

5. We normally use some limited video as a learning tool (for example when looking at active listening, teams can try to spot when important cue from a customer or senior manager was missed).

A major barrier to effective communication may be an individual's nervousness (and the resulting deleterious effect on their ability to communicate). This may be through fear of the customer's reaction, fear of management's reaction, a lack of confidence that they appear credible to their audience, or simply a fear of standing up in front of an audience and making a presentation. During the training we give participants some very practical tools & techniques to overcome these fears. Also, although participants will be put under a little bit of pressure during the training, we minimize 'personal exposure' by using team exercises, making everything genuinely fun, and anonymizing any real life scenarios/ case studies.

Workshop Leader

RICHARD "RICK" A. GRAHAM, PHD, PMP has been involved in projects for over 25 years. He has been active with a wide range of industries, including pharmaceuticals, chemicals, engineering and manufacture, construction, information systems and telecommunications and has held senior roles in Astra Pharmaceuticals, Eli Lilly, IMC and British Alcan.

Rick has a special interest in the risk and recovery aspects of projects, as well as in project contracting. He teaches a module of the MBA and Operational Research courses of a major UK business. Rick is a certified Project Management Professional® by PMI® and is a member of PMI's Risk Management Special Interest Group.

Rick is a popular key-note speaker and course facilitator on the number of project management topics, including Risk, Governance, Financial Aspects and Recovery of Projects, as well as Program & Portfolio Management.

His recent assignments include delivering project consultancy and management training work for British Telecom, Deutsche Telecom, BP, Bechtel Corporation, Dubai Construction Authority, Vodafone, Siemens, Skanska, Tetrapak, Microsoft, Nokia, Ericsson, Gazprom and Intesa Sanpaolo Group among others. Rick is also a certified lawyer and certified public accountant in the UK.

Rick is a well-known to PMI communities in his home country of UK, Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the US, Middle East, Central & Eastern Europe, as well as the far-flung places of the African continent; and recently Australia.

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Agenda

Setting the Scene
- The importance of great communication
- The building blocks of communication
- Communication with customers
- Communication with senior management
- Communication with other stakeholders
- Knowing yourself

Communication Skills
- What is communication?
- Communication Intelligence
- Barriers to communication
- Cultural issues
- What you say vs. how you say it vs. body language
- Active Listening
- Problem solving & resolving conflicts
- Empathy – seeing things from the other parties' perspective
- How small things can make a difference

Effective Presentation
- Presentation Planning
- Constructing an effective & compelling presentation
- Delivering the message
- Handling questions
- Dealing with a 'hostile' audience

Communicating with Customers
- What do customers want?
- High impact meetings
- Active listening
- Dealing with questions
- Structuring & controlling questions
- Sources of Authority (where there may be limited 'actual' authority)

Communicating with Senior Management
- What does senior management want?
- Senior management communication styles
- Dealing with tough approaches
- Building relationships
- The importance of delivering on promises
- The elevator pitch
- When to use writing as follow up and how
- Virtual (e.g. Skype) skills

Communicating with Internal Stakeholders
- Influencing without authority
- Organizational collaboration and its effect on the customer experience
- Doing your homework

Where to Start
- Summary
- Action plans