

professional development portfolio

Communicating Complex Ideas

by Anna Faherty

How do you explain complicated concepts and issues to colleagues or others who do not have your technical expertise? Whether getting support for ideas from senior management or communicating critical issues to customers and non-technical colleagues, professionals in a wide range of disciplines are increasingly finding that to succeed they need to sharpen their communication skills to augment their technical expertise. The difficulty lies in the complexity of the message. Sharing the full detail of an issue risks baffling the recipient; simplifying the matter can be difficult without misleading.

Communicating Complex Ideas enables learners to:

- analyse the needs of their audience,
- choose the appropriate form of delivery
- plan and design an effective communication
- evaluate its effectiveness.

This course provides a professional process for a professional audience to develop their skills in this under emphasised area.

Learning outcomes

Principles of communication

- What is communication?
- What is a complex idea?
- What are the key principles?
- What are the barriers to communicating complex ideas?
- How do I make myself clear?
- How do I reflect on and evaluate my performance?

Within the organisation

- Why might I need to communicate ideas?
- Who am I communicating to within the organisation?
- What am I communicating within the organisation?
- What techniques and tools can I use?
- How should I explain things in writing?
- How do I explain things verbally?
- How do I give a presentation?
- How do I ensure I achieve my objectives?

Beyond the organisation

- Why might I need to communicate ideas?
- Who am I communicating to beyond the organisation?
- What am I communicating beyond the organisation?
- How do I engage people beyond the organisation?
- What techniques and tools can I use?
- How should I explain things in writing?
- How do I explain things verbally?
- How do I give a presentation?
- How do I ensure I have achieved my objectives?

Dealing with the media

- Who are the media?
- What should I expect from the media?
- How do I communicate with the media?
- How do I ensure I'm targeting the right audience?
- What is the difference between TV, radio, print and online?
- What are the challenges when dealing with the media?

Advanced topics

- How do I communicate extremely complex ideas?
- How do I communicate with international audiences?
- How do I handle risk and uncertainty?
- How do I communicate controversial ideas?
- What ethical issues might I face?
- How do I prevent things from going wrong?
- What do I do when things go wrong?
- What other approaches could I consider?

Target audience

Technical specialists in a wide variety of professions who face the need to communicate important facts and concepts to non-technical colleagues or customers.