



Communication Skills - I

Introduction

The ability to communicate your ideas effectively is a vital skill, whether it be a presentation, an interview, a negotiation or any relevant interpersonal situation. Not only is it a crucial aptitude but also a trainable one that we must study and develop, especially if we intend to be in a leadership position in our company, in our family or in our community.

This introductory course will give you the tools and techniques to grow as a persuasive and strategic communicator, and even more importantly, the course will also give you the opportunity to practice, practice and practice. The best way to improve your skills is to practice and to receive valuable feedback from the coaches and your teammates.

This course will be followed by a second part (Communication Skills-II), in which we will touch more advanced challenges: ceremonial speeches, public speaking during conflicts and controversies, and media training.

Objectives

The goal of this course is to provide MiM students with effective tools to improve their interpersonal communication skills, useful for their time at the IESE Business School for teamwork, business presentations and job interviews, among other important situations.

The course will focus on the three aspects that a communicator has to master:

- i. structure,
- ii. content
- iii. delivery.

At the end of this course, the students will:

- Learn specific techniques on how to build practical structures with a strong opening and closing and with well-organized ideas;
- Add powerful content to the speech to improve the clarity of the presentation and to anchor in the mind of the audience the key messages;
- Improve their delivery style learning to use the body language, the voice and the stage in a more effective way;
- Feel more confident in any real speaking moment or event.

Competences

Basic Competences

- CB8. The students can integrate knowledge and face the complexity of formulating judgments based on information that, being incomplete or limited, includes reflections on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.
- CB9. Students know how to communicate their conclusions and the knowledge and ultimate reasons that support them to specialized and non-specialized audiences in a clear and unambiguous way.

General Competences

- CG1 - Listen, understand, and contrast the points of view of others to make an objective composition of a business situation. Communicate in a structured and persuasive way. (Interpersonal communication).
- CG2 - Work effectively in multicultural teams, assuming the leadership of a project when required. Integrate the value of diversity in the decision process and teamwork. (Ability to work in multicultural teams).
- CG3 - Critically evaluate the information and the context of a business situation to reach its own conclusions for making prudential decisions. (Critical thinking).
- CG4 - Acquire the self-knowledge and self-control necessary to work effectively in professional environments under pressure, understanding the motivations of others and the culture of the company. (Emotional intelligence).
- CG5 - Apply proven ethical criteria in making business decisions, respecting the intrinsic dignity of each person and the achievement of the common good. (Integrity).
- CG6 - Develop a proactive and open mindset to organizational change in order to design and promote process improvement initiatives and facilitate one's ability to adapt to new organizational cultures. (Innovative spirit).

Specific Competences

- CE02 - Develop communication skills in a business context following the classic scheme of logos, ethos, and pathos, to structure a solid and convincing discourse, accompanied by body language and using effective stories and images ("storytelling").
- CE14 - Identify the mechanisms of team management that generate an environment of collaboration, communication, trust, and achievement of the common goal.

Content

Topic No. 1: the rational speech

The "Logos speech" must have a main theme, convey a clear message, provide solid evidence in support of the message and promote a specific action from the audience.

The Logos structure is used to convince the audience with logic, reason and strong arguments. A Logos speech might also include Ethos (credibility) and Pathos (emotions) elements, but reason and logic are the building blocks.

Topic No. 2: Non-verbal language

Nonverbal communication (NVC) is the non-linguistic transmission of information through visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic (physical) channels.

Non-verbal language is at least as important as the speech's content and structure, but quite often neglected by business leaders. In this communication skills course, facilitators will dedicate part of the practical time to this matter.

Being conscious and present to what is happening here and now with yourself, your body and the people and world surrounding you is the first essential step in becoming a more effective communicator.

The most important elements of non-verbal communication that addressed in this course are the following: Eye contact, Gestures, Posture, Pauses, Voice, Energy, Attitude, Breath and Movement.

Topic No. 3: leadership

The “Ethos speech” has to have a main theme and convey a clear message and promote a specific action from the audience; but in the Ethos speech, the speaker uses his or her own credibility in support of the message and persuade the audience.

An Ethos speech is aiming at persuading your audience to choose a specific path of action mainly relying on your credibility as a leader, either because you have experienced a similar situation or because of your knowledge in the matter. It is a way of directly or indirectly answering the often-unarticulated concern by the audience: “Why should I trust you?”

Topic No. 4: storytelling

Storytelling is the art of explaining an anecdote with the final intention of sharing a message and anchoring it. A well told story allows you to build a connection with the audience as they might have lived a similar experience and because you show yourself in a more personal and human way. Moreover, the story allows you to share emotions, and that is why stories are used in situations when establishing powerful emotional connections is more important than using reason and arguments.

Evaluation

Grading will be based on two elements:

- Class participation (ideas shared and contribution to the full group sessions; and quality of the feedback given in the small group sessions): 33%
- Practical exercises (Evaluation of the speeches delivered during the practical sessions): 67%

The IESE Business School's Honor Code and Learning Partnership apply to all activities in this course. For individual assignments, unless explicitly stated, you should not interact with anyone else. For deliverables to be done in teams you should interact only with the members of your team.