Communicating for Public Sector Managers

April 11, 2011

Course Description

Public and private managers and professionals have had to withstand significant changes in their environments, rapid advances in managerial and communication technologies, economic and political uncertainty and increasing expectations of their performance. Communication is one of the key areas of knowledge and skill for public managers to succeed.

This course is designed to equip managers or managers-to-be with fundamental communicating knowledge and skills widely regarded to be among the most essential to managerial success. The course is structured in four parts: I: Building the Foundations; II: Levels and Contexts of Public Sector Communication; III: Essential Communication Skills; and IV: Special Challenges for Communicating. Communication so intrinsically involves “doing” that a Deweyan “learning-by-doing” approach is used in this course in public sector communication. In class and at-home diagnostics and exercises are central to this course. Communication is not something learned through a passive lecture-oriented course.
Overall Knowledge Objectives:

1. Describe and explain the different components of communication (sender, receiver, medium, feedback, etc.)
2. Identify potential barriers to effective communication in the public sector and describe several strategies/techniques for avoiding or overcoming each barrier
3. Understand the roles played by immediate, primary, and secondary audiences/stakeholders
4. Describe commonalities and differences among key different levels of communication: interpersonal, group/team, organizational, and inter-organizational
5. Identify and describe standard media for communicating in and among organizations
6. Describe the roles leading communications technologies perform and the upsides and downsides of using these technologies
7. Identify and discuss key elements or an organization’s communication policy and strategy
8. Describe and apply basic knowledge of how communication units function, including communication planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Overall Skill Objectives:

1. Systematically assess my communication styles and my strengths and weaknesses in communicating.
2. Begin planning specific steps/actions for improving my communication skills.
3. Be able to describe and practice using some key communication tools, such as:
   * Interpersonal sending and receiving skills
   * Communicating skills for group/team use: initiating, summarizing, clarifying, etc.
   * Organizational communication skills: using bypassing, counter-biasing, distortion resistant messages, etc.
   * Interorganizational skills: boundary spanning, environment scanning, etc.
   * Team-Building Skills
   * Communication Strategic Planning
   * Administrative writing skills
   * Oral presentation skills
   * Sticky Communication Skills
   * Meeting Leadership and Followership Skills
Notes for Instructors

Approach: This syllabus is based on a 15-week semester but can be adopted for shorter courses. I use the term “session 1,” for example, instead of “week 1” since some courses may meet more often or less often than once a week. Parts or topics can also be used or adapted without using the entire course. For example, Part II: Levels and Contexts of Public Sector Communication could be used in a course on Organizational Behavior or Leadership. A more conceptually oriented course might omit Part III: Essential Communication Skills. Another course might omit student presentations of projects so would allow another session for Special Challenges. Possibilities include: Uses and Misuses of Information Technology, Reaching the Hard to Reach, Intercultural Communication in the Workplace. Different programs cover communication in different ways. At Rutgers-Camden, attention to communication spans a number of courses taught primarily by full-time faculty including Leadership and Communication Skills, Managerial Survival Skills, Organizational Behavior, and Public Management. The Evans School at the University of Washington, for example, offers a series of one-credit workshops on various topics including Professional Communication, Effective Collaboration With Diverse Teams Writing for Decision Makers, Oral Communication, Tools for Communicating Across Cultures, and the Art of Facilitation. These workshops are taught by affiliated practitioner faculty. Another highly useful syllabus for a course in Communication Skills for Public Leaders has been developed by Prof. Greg Streib, Georgia State University. This syllabus contains interesting exercises and assignments. One version can be linked via http://www2.gsu.edu/~padgds/PAUS8091Spring2006.htm.

Note that the focus in this Foundations Project syllabus lies with administrative communication rather than with communication during election campaigns or even the rhetoric of executive policy speeches that tend to be the domain of political communication courses. Substantial overlap, of course, exists. Both fields pay attention to the role news media play in policy development and program management although political communication courses typically emphasize this more. The course described here focuses more on internal and external communication involving administrative agencies and organizations.
Recommended Resources:

Note: Since administrative communication is less commonly taught in public administration and has traditionally been less covered by *Public Administration Review* than other topics in the Foundations Series, I suggest a number of other sources to use both as texts and supplementary readings. And because of the nature of communication as a subject, I also suggest a number of video and audio clips that can be downloaded from the web.


4. Materials supplied via the online Course/Resources site

5. Access to copies of the *Public Administration Review* and other journals.

Journals focusing on communication issues include:

- *Business Communication Quarterly*
- *Communication Abstracts*
- *Communication Law and Policy*
- *Communication Theory*
- *Critical Studies in Media Communication*
- *Human Communication Research*
- *Information, Communication and Society*
- *Information, Communication and Technology*
- *Intercultural Communication*
- *International Journal of Communication*
- *Journal of Applied Communication Research*
- *Journal of Business Communication*
- *Journal of Communication*
- *Journal of Communication Studies*
- *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*
- *Mass Communication and Society*
- *Organizational Communication*
- *Political Communication*
- *Political Communication and Persuasion*
- *Public Communication and Behavior*
- *Studies in Public Communication*
- *Technical Communication Quarterly*

Some useful glossaries of communication terms can be found at:


Course Expectations

Instructor Note: Instructors will want to set expectations consistent with the thrust of their course. For most courses for MPA/MBA students, offering a set of practical options is most useful in my experience. The options that follow require students to apply communication knowledge and skill in actual situations. If the course is more theoretically oriented, other kinds of assignments (literature reviews, critiques of theories, etc.) are warranted. Exams seem less appropriate to me given the nature of the subject but may fit given the aims of a particular course.

All students are expected to:

1. Read assigned material and complete assigned exercises before class and be prepared to participate in any simulations, discussions, or exercises. (See criteria for course participation below.)

2. Complete a Course Project: Participants will be required to complete one course individual project from the following options.
   a. Communication Skills Handbook: Participants may choose to do a handbook on a particular skill or set of leadership/communication skills covered in this course or potentially covered in this course (e.g., communicating during conflict, reaching the hard to reach, intercultural communication, or other skills). The Skills Handbook should: 1. Describe the skill(s), 2. Place the skills in context (why, where, and how are they used?), 3. Give basic pointers on how to use the skill(s) effectively (drawing from credible sources as well as your own experience), 4. Devise several exercises (with instructions) for MPAers to use as practice—exercises that you will conduct in class. and 5. Provide References for the sources you use in your handbook, and 6. Include an Annotated Bibliography on your topic.

   Proposal Due: Session 4
   Draft Due: Session 9
   Project Due: Session 13

   b. Skills Applications: Participants may choose to actually applying two of the tools listed above (or approved by the professor) in actual work settings. Each application should be about 8-15 pages apiece depending upon the tool chosen and the context in which it is applied. As with the above choices, proper referencing and organizing of your paper are required.

   Proposal Due: Session 4
   Draft Due: Session 9
   Project Due: Session 13

   c. Communication Strategic Plan with Key Messages. Another option is to plan strategy for a public interest communication campaign. This can be for a cause or program (e.g., anti-obesity, recycling, preventing child abuse, promoting seed grants for small business) or for a management reform or change (e.g., creating or reorganizing an organization, adopting a new information system, revamping evaluation processes). Use the format from Garnett, Communicating for Results, chapter 3 and as described in class. Part of this plan should include three actual “products” of your communication campaign, for example a written news release, script for infomercial, PSA video, etc.

   Proposal Due: Session 4
   Draft Due: Session 9
   Project Due: Session 13

   d. Sticky Message Campaign. This choice involves using the Heath and Heath sticky message principles to develop a 2-3 part communication campaign. The focus of this campaign can be causes, programs, or reforms as with option e. All
two or three “products” of this campaign (releases, video infomercials, radio spots, brochures, etc.) must observe sticky message principles. More specifics about this option are on the Sakai site and in class discussion.

Proposal Due: Session 4
Draft Due: Session 9
Project Due: Session 13

STANDARDS FOR EVALUATION

Specific criteria for how the project will be evaluated are part of this syllabus or part of materials that will be distributed via the course website or other means. Pay particular attention to these criteria, checking frequently to see whether you are tailoring your work accordingly. Keep in mind particularly that the bottom line with any of these projects is to: DEMONSTRATE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THIS COURSE. THIS INVOLVES DRAWING FROM COURSE READING, LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS, EXERCISES, SIMULATIONS, AND OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES. Don't leave it to chance that I can guess what you have learned. Demonstrate it directly, frequently, and artfully.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All projects must include references and bibliography. Follow the style guides in your syllabus and course packet. Be sure to observe the University Guidelines on academic integrity and plagiarism (Link specific guidelines here)

COURSE PARTICIPATION

In addition to these written requirements, you will be expected to participate intelligently in class. This is a “no brainer” for a course in developing knowledge and skill in communicating.

Intelligent participation takes these forms:

--adequacy of preparation (This means reading the assigned material, reflecting on it, comparing it to your own experience and to other things you've been reading, and organizing your thoughts before class).

--degree to which participation is informed (misinformed comments, however-frequent distract class direction and reduce class momentum. Don’t be overly cautious, just avoid "shooting from the hip.")

--relevance of contribution (comments totally off - the-topic and comments appropriate an hour before, but no longer timely-likewise diffuse momentum.)

-insight in terms of participation (ideas, comments, questions which spark new directions or prevent the class from overlooking key points or issues contribute more than do comments which state the obvious or retread covered ground.)

--amount of participation (Amount of participation by itself isn't as important as these other qualities, particularly if these other guidelines are violated. But if your contributions are informed, relevant, and insightful, let them flow.)

The quality of your course participation (including involvement in management/communicating simulations, role-playing, presentations, discussions, etc.) will be factored into your final grade. Intelligent, constructive, enthusiastic
participation can boost your grade, particularly in borderline situations. [Note to Instructors: Some instructors prefer to assign a letter or point grade for a student’s class participation. In my experience, class participation is difficult to measure with the precision implied by a numerical score or letter grade and arguably the source of the majority of grievances on grading. Also, I have generally found that motivating students to participate more through instructional activities and oral feedback works better for me than putting more emphasis on grading participation. Again, you need to use what works for you].

Even though administrative communication is not as widely taught as most subfields within public administration—and deserves far more attention than it currently receives—a growing number of schools and faculty members teach courses or segments relevant to this topic. This syllabus therefore includes more detail about specific learning components and links to some of the best instruction from other programs.

For the readings from PAR, where possible, a range of time periods is represented so that students get a flavor for earlier treatments and how the topic has evolved. Instructors may select from among recommended readings to fit the level and focus of their course.

Part I: Building the Foundations

Session 1: Course Orientation and the Importance of Communication

Learning Objectives:
1. Increase awareness of how communication affects public sector outcomes.
2. Compare expectations about course content, requirements, and approach;
3. Learn what is involved in the Skill building process;
4. Begin developing class cohesion;
5. Start thinking about the agenda for the rest of the course;
6. Preview the different Course Project options

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Garnett and Kouzmin 2007 (Communicating Throughout Katrina)
2. Garnett, Marlowe, and Pandey 2008 (provides empirical evidence for value of communication)

Other Sources:
1. Garnett, Communicating for Results, Chapter 1: “Why Communication is So Crucial to Government Success”
2. George Lardner, Jr., "How Kristen Died" in Richard Stillman, editor, Concepts and Cases in Public Administration, 8th or 9th editions.
3. Cases or news items of national/local/regional interest that displays importance of sound communicating

Learning Components:

Conduct Ice Breaker
Starter—case/simulation (What role does communication play in the case?)
Hear student objectives for course. (Students also explain their objectives on Student Information Sheet.)
Go over approach to course, learning methods, requirements, and flow of syllabus
Explain role of diagnostic exercises.
Give assignment for next class.

Learning Assignments:

1. Bring to next session an account (news article, printout, video, personal account, etc. showing the positive or negative impact of communication on public sector outcomes.

Session 2: Communication Principles and Strategy

Learning Objectives:

1. Learn (or review) the principles of communication strategic planning
2. Apply the Communication Strategic Planning process to an actual managerial/political case
3. Get feedback on performance with this application
4. Recognize and apply key organization communication skills

Recommended Reading:

*From PAR:*
1. Rainey and Thomson 2006
2. Vogel 1968 and Koehler 1973 are early examples of communication analysis in PAR
3. Bryson and Anderson 2000

*Other Sources:*


**Learning Components:**
- Discuss evidence students bring in about communication’s relevance
- Students share learning style types and discuss implications (for them and others) for class learning and on-the-job learning
- Present and discuss Strategic Communication process (Garnett, Chapter 3)
- Apply that process to an actual situation (This can focus on a written case, current event, campus cause, or something else students or instructor select and can be done in teams or as a full class. If teams are used, each can focus on a different scenario or on the same one. In the latter case, each may approach it differently. Worksheets and instructions are available upon request).
- Class closes with preliminary feedback from instructor (to groups individually and entire class)

[Note: Template/Worksheets for Communication Strategic Planning can be obtained from garnett@camden.rutgers.edu.]

**Assignment for Next Session:**
Work on Communication Strategic Plan and be prepared to present it next session.

**Session 3: Crafting Sticky, Persuasive Messages**

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Gain experience presenting a Communication Strategic Plan
2. Receive feedback on that plan
3. Describe and explain the qualities that make a message “sticky” (i.e., one that gets attention, gets remembered and is likely to prompt action)
4. Review existing messages to assess stickiness qualities
5. Brainstorm ideas for possible course sticky projects

**Recommended Reading:**

*From PAR:*
1. *Yarwood and Enis 1982* (advertising and publicity programs)
2. *McCurdy 1995* (humor in public administration)

**Other Sources:**
1. Chip and Dan Heath, http://www.madetostick.com [From Excerpts, read the introduction

Learning Components:
Teams or full class present communication strategy and get feedback from instructor and other teams
Instructor and students review criteria for a sticky message
Students (in teams or full class) view public service announcements or commercials and rate them on stickiness criteria (Note: Good sources include: youtube.com, veryfunnyads.com, adcouncil.org, www.pueblo.gsa.gov/comrcial.htm, http://www.npca.org/media_center/psas/.
Teams explain to rest of class the rationale for their ratings
Full class brainstorms about possible causes, projects, programs for which a sticky message campaign might prove effective.

Assignments for Next Session:
Find two examples of sticky and non-sticky messages and place on the course website or bring to class. Be prepared to present your examples in class.

Part II: Levels and Contexts of Communication

Session 4: Personal and Interpersonal Communication

Learning Objectives:
1. Review and practice interpersonal communicating skills for sending and receiving
2. Be able to describe qualities of effective feedback and practice giving feedback

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Vogel 1968 (earlier work using analysis of social interaction)
2. Stivers 1994 (the listening bureaucrat)
3. Berman and West 2008 (study of administrator’s social skills, Emotional Intelligence)

Other Sources:
1. Garnett, Communicating for Results, chapter 4: “Relating to Administrative Superiors and Elected Officials”
3. A good two-video treatment of Emotional Intelligence can be linked at:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y88Eb3aVBAE (part 1)
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNYQoYM93E&NR=1 (part 2 showing the Emotional Intelligence of President Barack Obama)

Learning Components:
Review qualities of effective and supportive interpersonal communication
Describe the criteria for effective communication feedback
Practice using supportive communication in triads
Receive feedback on communication performance from observers and instructor
Assess change in performance and note skills to develop

Assignments for Next Session:
1. Submit (electronically) your proposal for course communication project
2. Apply interpersonal communicating skills during the week and be prepared to report on what happened

Session 5: Group and Team Communication

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe key group communication skills
2. Apply these skills in group/team settings involving an actual task
3. Constructively critique your group’s performance as well as your performance in that group
4. Describe the basic stages in team building and explain what behaviors or actions are necessary to improve team performance
Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Bryson and Anderson 2000 (large group interaction methods for change)
2. Jensen 2007 (influence tactics for group decision making)
3. Nicholson 1971 (use of stand-up meetings)
4. Hubbell 1940 (early “how to” instruction on committees)

Other Sources:
1. Handouts on Group Skills (Online course site)
5. Brian Cole Miller, Quick Team Building Activities for Busy Managers. New York: AMACOM, 2003. (Has exercises to use for illustrating team communication)

Learning Components:
- Hear brief reports on student applications of supportive interpersonal communicating skills
- Review group constructive and destructive group/team behaviors
- Practice group/team skills with an actual task
- Review stages and behaviors related to team building
- Assess which stage this class has reached in terms of team development
- Assess other teams (work and otherwise) you are on in terms of team development

Assignment:
1. Think about the organizational communication where you are employed or study. What appear to be the most used media of communication? The most common kinds of messages sent? The key barriers to communication? The consequences of blockage or distortion? Means used to avoid blockage or distortion? Be prepared to report next class.

Session 6: Organizational Communication

Learning Objectives:
1. Identify barriers (sources of blockage or distortion) to sound organizational communication
2. Give examples of how these barriers have affected your organization
3. Describe tools/techniques for avoiding or minimizing blockage or distortion
4. Practice using these techniques in a class setting and during the week in your organizational setting
5. List ways organizations can increase communication internally and compare with the ways your organization uses
6. Be able to discuss the uses and abuses of information technology for internal organizational communication.
7. Assess my aptitude for leading positive change and describe roles communication plays in change

Recommended Reading:
From PAR:
1. Corson 1940 and Latham 1940 (two early descriptions of internal organizational communication in government agencies)
2. Viteritti and Carponcy 1991 (use of information in organizational control)
3. Pandey and Garnett 2006 (examines internal and external communication)
4. Garnett, Marlowe, and Pandey 2008 (empirical tests of communication’s role in organizational performance)

Other Sources:
1. Garnett, Communicating for Results, Chapter 5: “Strengthening Exchanges with Subordinates”

The following are good sources for detailed essays on specific aspects of organizational communication:

Learning Components:
Review the roles downward, upward, and lateral communication play in organizations
Discuss barriers to effective organizational communication and techniques for avoiding or overcoming those barriers: audience analysis, redundancy, bypassing, distortion-resistant messages, etc.
Discuss common media and channels for intra-organizational communication
Students report about their assignments (communication within their organization) [Note: an option is to engage student examples throughout the above discussions]

Assignments:
1. Think of one example of how you played the role of boundary spanner for your organization or how someone else you know played that role. If you know, what resulted from that boundary spanning?

Session 7: Interorganizational Communication

Learning Objectives:
1. Using audience analysis and stakeholder analysis frameworks compare audience and stakeholder characteristics and roles
2. Describe what a network is and to identify different types of networks
3. Describe several formal and informal approaches for relating to people in other organizations
4. Describe and evaluate at least six different techniques for facilitating collaboration among organizations
5. Compare types of conflict among organizations and how they affect communication
6. Apply a contingency framework to managing conflict

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Dobbs 1944 (interagency communication at regional level)
2. O’Toole 1997 (network research issues)
4. Berry, et al. 2004 (traditions of network research)
5. Agranoff 2006 (lessons for collaborative networks)
7. Ospina and Yaroni 2003 (collaboration, trust, and communication)
8. Page 2004 (accountability in interagency collaboratives)
9. Townsend 2004 (communication and criminal justice networks)

Other Sources:
1. Garnett, Communicating for Results, Chapter 6: “Improving Relations with Colleagues and other Agencies.”

Learning Components:
Importance of interorganizational communication (most issues/services of any magnitude now require action by multiple organizations)
Basics of audience analysis and stakeholder analysis
The concept of network and different types of networks
Formal and informal strategies for achieving interorganizational cooperation: advantages and disadvantages
Application of audience analysis, stakeholder analysis and cooperation strategies on case
Feedback on team performance
Review and apply conflict management strategies

Assignment:
1. Bring to class a list of what your organization uses to communicate with its different publics (Use the organization where you are employed or other kind of organization (your school, social organization, etc.) if you aren’t currently employed)

Session 8: Communicating with Publics

Learning Objectives:
1. Be able to identify publics/audiences/stakeholders and the communication roles they play in a specific issue
2. Identify and describe leading approaches for reaching publics both low-tech and high-tech
3. Compare the strengths and limitations of these direct and indirect approaches
4. Articulate the leading do’s and don’ts for relating to news editors and reporters

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Dunn 1968 (press relations)
2. Brown 1955 and 1972 (management of advisory committees)
3. Yarwood and Enis 1982 (using advertising and publicity)
4. Bingham, Nabatchi, and O’Leary 2005 (citizen participation in governance)
5. Baker Addams and Davis 2005 (improving public hearings)
7. Nelson 2002 (balancing privacy and security with public information)
8. Kosar 2008 (interview on White House communication operation)

Other Sources:
1. Garnett, Communicating for Results in Government, Chapter 7: “Communicating with Government’s Publics”

Learning Components:

Direct vs. Indirect Communication with Publics
Relating to Media: Do’s and Don’ts
Panel of news professionals, citizen stakeholders, and public information officers. 
Thrust: What are role expectations for each participant?
Guest PIO and/or Reporter/Editor
In teams, write a news release for a local emergency, Reductions in Force, new program, or other story. Pay attention to who, what, when, where and news angles.
(websites, cable television, mail (e-mail and US mail),
Communicating with the Hard to Reach
Discuss other approaches
town meetings, electronic forums, etc.)
Assignments:

1. Review the course rating form for presentations, noting where you think your strengths and shortcomings lie
2. Come prepared to describe your best and worst presentation. What do you think accounted for the difference?

Session 9: Using Communications Technologies

Learning Objectives:
1. Recognize that communications technologies can be high-tech or low-tech
2. List and briefly describe leading communications technologies and how they are used
3. Compare the upsides and downsides of communications technologies in general and for specific cases technologies, including impact on democratic governance
4. Describe potential barriers involved with communication between managers and IT/CT professionals/specialists

Recommended Reading:
From PAR:
1. Menzel 1998 (ethical issues in cyber-management)
2. Bovens and Zouridas 2002 (communications technology affects on governance)
3. Kellog and Mathur 2003 (information access paradox in urban areas)
4. Norris and Moon 2005 (communication as part of local e-government)
5. Scott 2005 (web impact on municipal government communication)
6. Rethemeyer 2007 (effects of internet on democracy)
7. Tolbert and Mossberger 2006 (E-gov impact on citizen trust of government)
8. Dawes 2008 (evolution and challenges for E-governance)
10. Hackler and Saxton 2007 (IT impact on nonprofit agency communication)

Other Sources:
4. Interesting, useful video on social networking:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cma3MABaHsw&feature=fvw
6. Everett M. Rogers, Communication Technology. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986 (classic compendium of different technologies to that date)
7. “A world of connections.” The Economist. January 20, 2010. (useful article on the growth and impact of social networking a la Facebook, Twitter, etc. That edition has a special series on social networking)

**Learning Components:**

1. Compare notes on what communications technologies participants use
2. Review readings on different types and uses of communications technologies
3. Hold debate: Communications technologies—pro and con
4. Discuss points readings make about effects of CT on democratic governance

**Assignments:**

**Part III: Specific Communication Skills**

[Note: This section could be moved up front for skills-oriented courses, especially when students may need extra practice to help them during the rest of the course. Part III could also be omitted in more policy or administratively oriented courses and when students are advanced enough to possess these oral and written skills]

**Session 10: Presenting Convincingly**

**Learning Objectives:**

1. List at least three reasons why effective presentation skills are important to acquire
2. Review course criteria for effective presentations
3. Describe the roles that key components of a presentation play
4. Describe key do’s and don’ts of oral presentations
5. Analyze my own presentation strengths and weaknesses

**Recommended Reading:**

*From PAR:*

1. Baker, Addams, and Davis 2005 (skills for public hearings)
2. Jensen 2007 (persuasion tactics, including presentations)

5. A number of interesting presentations/speeches are captured on video at ted.com
Session 11: Holding Effective Meetings

Learning Objectives:
1. Explain the criteria for deciding whether to hold meetings and apply these criteria to actual management situations
2. Compare different types of meetings and their purposes
3. Describe the roles and skill sets of key meeting participants: leader, facilitator, recorder, participant
4. List and describe essential steps in meeting preparation and follow-up
5. Discuss at least five different strategies for agenda setting and sequencing and apply agenda strategies in a group exercise
6. Identify the most common faults that limit meeting effectiveness
7. Gain practice with meeting skills in a meeting simulation

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Nicholson 1971 (using stand up meetings)
2. Baker, Addams, and Davis 2005 (skills for hearings)
3. Bryson and Anderson 2000 (inter-group interaction methods—involves meetings)

Other Sources:
2. John Cleese (Monty Python) training video: “Meetings, Bloody Meetings”
8. A number of videos on meetings can be used to stimulate interest and give pointers. One good one is: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSft2OeMnzQ&feature=related

Learning Components:
1. Discussion: Why are meetings important to governing?
2. Sharing of meeting disasters or triumphs
3. View video: “Meetings, Bloody Meetings” [optional]
4. Review of criteria: “To Meet or Not to Meet?”
5. Present Meeting stages and key issues: preparation, pre-meeting, meeting, follow-up
6. Conduct exercise on meeting agenda strategy
7. Hold meeting simulation and discuss feedback on performance

Assignment: List the communications technologies you use in your job or personal life. Reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of these technologies.

Session 12: Macro Writing Skills (Organization, Tone, and Analysis)

[Note: If the written course project is the central requirement for the course and participants have less experience writing, I sometimes move the sessions on writing toward the beginning of the course. For better writers, having the sessions close to the written project due date serves as a useful review]

Learning Objectives:
1. Be able to identify different patterns for organizing writing (or speaking)
2. Be able to strategically select those organizational patterns most appropriate to purpose, audience, management situation and other factors
3. Use headings and other organizational aids effectively
4. Be able to identify those components in writing that affect tone
5. Practice crafting messages that convey different tones
6. Identify and avoid common pitfalls in analysis and logic that can damage professional credibility

Recommended Reading:

From PAR:
1. Lidman and Sommers 2005 (tips for policy analysts including writing)

Other Sources:
3. Patricia M. Shields and Hassan Tajalli, Intermediate Theory: The Missing Link in Successful Student Scholarship
http://ecommons.txstate.edu/polsfacp/39/ (useful on writing conceptual, analytical research papers)

Learning Components:
- Discussion: Why does writing matter in public administration?
- Sharing and feedback on participant writing samples
- Review reading on concepts of tone, organization, analysis
- Do writing exercises on tone. What is the tone? What creates this tone?
- Assess volunteer participant samples and instructor-selected samples in terms of organization. What organizational/sequencing patterns are used? Why? What use is made of logic or analysis? Is this done correctly?

Assignments:
1. Subject this same writing sample to a spelling and style/grammar check via word processing. What gets flagged? (passive voice, long sentences, etc.)
2. Do the skills exercises for writing readability (chapter 3)
3. Review your course project for tone, organization, and analysis. Use the checklists at the back of the appropriate chapters (4, 5, 6) if they help.

**Session 13: Micro Writing Skills** (Style)

**Learning Objectives:**
1. Review common problems in writing style that cause confusion, wordiness, or weakness
2. Practice applying Guidelines for More Readable Writing

**Recommended Reading:**

*Other Sources:*
4. A highly useful resource that covers writing style, grammar and usage in interactive e format is found at: http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/index.html.

Learning Components:
- Discuss the results of participant style/grammar checks.
- Review reading on guidelines for more readable writing
- Review practice exercises on these guidelines
- In teams apply both macro and micro writing skills on a writing task

**Part IV: Special Challenges for Communicating**
Session 14: Managing Communication Functions

Learning Objectives:
1. Identify and describe major communication functions of a public organization, including communication planning, policy and procedures, issue management, social marketing, news media relations, web design, media product development (videos, publications, etc.), freedom of information, evaluating communication impact.
2. Compare the main different approaches/models to public organization communication (media relations, public information, public affairs, communication)
3. Discuss the practical and ethical issues involved with issue management.
4. Explain what is involved in evaluating and demonstrating the effectiveness of communication and learning some ways to do this.
5. Discuss key legal issues affecting public sector communication including freedom of information/secrecy, restrictions on propaganda/publicity,
5. Compare the roles of the public manager and public information/relations specialist in communicating, noting how they can complement each other.

Recommended Reading:
From PAR:
1. Yarwood and Enis 1982 (federal advertising and publicity programs)
2. Roberts 2000 (weakening of Freedom of Information Act)
3. Nelson 2002 (balancing secrecy and information)
4. Lee 2006 (function of government reporting)

Other Sources:

Learning Components:
1. Relate experiences you have had with the communication/public information arm of your organization. What did you learn?
2. Review of major models of public sector communication (media relations, public information, public affairs, communication-Garnett 2010/Grunig and Grunig 1992). Which does your organization have?
3. Guest Lecture by Communication Manager: “What A Communication Unit Does, How it Does it and How that Relates to the Rest of Us”
4. Discussion: “Issue Management Pro or Con”
5. Exercise: Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Safe Bicycling Campaign [or other topic chosen by class or instructor]
6. Discussion: Key Legal Issues Surrounding Communication (a guest resource from the legal or communication unit could be tapped to lead this)

Session 15: Communicating During Crises [disasters; financial crises, etc.]

Learning Objectives:
1. Recognize the relevance of crisis management for public administrators today
2. Compare different types of crises and different stages of crisis in terms of communication
3. Compare the communication roles of key different crisis actors
4. Apply crisis communication strategy to a crisis scenario

Recommended Reading:
From PAR:
1. Scanlon et al. 1985 (coping with the media during disasters)
2. Boin and ‘t Hart 2003 (leadership and crises)
3. Wise 2006 (organizing for security after Katrina)
4. Donahue 2006 (Spaceshuttle Columbia crisis response)
5. Jenkins 2006 (interoperable communication in Homeland Security)
6. Waugh and Streib 2006 (collaboration for effective emergency management)
7. Kiefer and Montjoy 2006 (networks and evacuation from Katrina)
8. Garnett and Kouzmin 2007 (crisis communication perspectives applied to Katrina)
9. Comfort 2007 (Katrina in hindsight including communication)
10. Morris, Morris and Jones 2007 (military response to Katrina)
11. Moynihan 2008 (network learning during crises)
12. Capucu, Augustin, and Garyeve 2009 (interstate cooperation with Rita and Katrina)
13. Simo and Bies 2007 (NGO cooperation during Katrina)

Other Sources:

Learning Components:

Discuss: Why should public administrators know about crisis management and crisis communication?
Review readings on different types of crises and different stages of crises.
Compare different approaches to crisis communication
Assess the crisis communication approaches and effectiveness in a selected case [Note: The case can be selected for local/regional significance or be a major case that all students would find relevant]
In teams, develop a communication strategy for a specific crisis scenario and receive feedback on team strategy and team process

Assignment: For those opting to present their course projects, prepare to present next session according to course instructions and presentation criteria. [Note: For large classes, a select few may be able to present or two weeks of presentation may be included, dropping coverage of Special Challenges. Where feasible, I suggest integrating course projects into the relevant sessions, e.g., a Skills Handbook on Agency Collaboration as part of the session on Inter-organizational communication.]

Optional Session: Course Presentations and Course Wrap-up
(Whether presentations are appropriate depends on course approach. Depending on class size and focus, presentations and feedback could extend to two or more sessions)
Learning Objectives:
1. Experience the satisfaction professionals feel from sharing knowledge with each other.
2. Gain the practice of making a formal presentation in a supportive environment.
3. Receive feedback on presentation skills.
4. Gain knowledge conveyed by the other presentations.

Recommended Reading:

Other Sources:
1. Review Course Rating Form for Presentations

STYLE INSTRUCTIONS FOR COURSE PAPER

When doing a course paper/project for Advanced Public Communication be sure to observe the following style guidelines. Please also note and observe other instructions about project content that might be included in the syllabus, course handout, Sakai Assignments page or agreed upon outline.

1. Use a title that reflects coverage and stimulates interest. Developing a title that reflects your coverage, gives readers a sense of what you are writing about, and perhaps stimulates them to begin reading gives you a big handle on any writing task. A title should do more than give generalities- "A Strategic Plan for Communicating with Camden’s Fairview Neighborhood" tells more than "Strategic Communication Plan." When avoiding generalities, don't make the opposite mistake of having such a long, detailed title that readers get bored or confused. Your title should also be more than a categorical statement of the kind of analysis it is. “Reaching Neighbors in Camden’s Fairview Community: A Communication Strategic Plan" makes an even more interesting and more enlightening title."

2. Include a Table of Contents that keys sections of your paper to specific pages. The Contents page should list the major and minor sections of your paper and on which page each section begins. A Table of Contents is easy to construct if you have used headings conscientiously.

3. Be sure to number each page starting with the second page. This will be important for completing your Table of Contents, for future reference to specific points, and in case paper comes apart as it often does if glassine cover with plastic backing are used. [Use staples or more secure binding instead!] Numbers can be at top or bottom as long as used consistently.

4. Include an Executive Summary. Communications research shows that many readers will only read a few paragraphs of a report, memo, analysis, etc. unless they: 1. Realize the import of what you wrote for them or their organization, or 2. Have an existing interest in or you can interest them in what you have written. Of course you want to
motivate readers to read your full report. But if they don't, your 1-3 page Executive Summary should give the basics: 1. Purpose, Scope, Methods; 2. Key Findings; 3. Summary of Conclusions; 4. Major recommendations (if appropriate). Use these or similar headings in your Executive Summary. The criterion you should use in deciding what to put in an Executive Summary is this: "If I knew a reader would read only this summary, what must they see?"

5. **Use a sound introduction.** Your opening section (not necessarily called Introduction) should typically include the following elements:
Paper Style Guide, page 2

(1) Opening that stimulates interest through quote, data, description of a specific situation, etc.

(2) Statement of Purpose that describes your objectives with this paper.

(3) Preview that previews what is to follow so that readers know what is coming. Be sure that your preview lists the topics you will cover and in the order in which they appear. If you number topics in your preview (a helpful idea), be sure to use the same numbering scheme and sequence in your paper.

6. Use Center and Side Headings judiciously. Headings are signposts for readers (and for writers). You will be far more likely to hit the key points, follow a logical flow of thought, and write a convincing report if you use headings for major and minor sections. You will also be more likely to keep readers on track with headings. These headings should be emphasized in **boldface**, different font, or other means so readers can track easily. Headings should also conform to the standards described in Garnett, Chapter 4: Organizing Your Writing to Accomplish Management Objectives. (on reserve).

7. Include relevant and useful Appendixes. Include material at the back of your paper/project that (1) provides useful detail, hands-on feel, or documentation that will help readers and that (2) would interrupt the flow of your narrative if included in the body of your paper. Copies of legislation or regulations, list of interviews, copy of questionnaire used, annual reports, etc. included in an appendix can round out your paper, making it a total package more useful to you and to other readers. Some cautions apply, however: a. Be sure that the item included really would be valuable for reference and that it belongs in an appendix rather than the body. (If readers must see it to understand later sections, put it in the body and perhaps summarized or in table or chart form). b. Be sure that your Appendix doesn't become more than it really is an appendage. Massive appendixes should not be used to cover up skimpy analyses/reports. Since an appendix usually includes documents and other material created by someone else, this counts far less toward a grade than does the body of your report. The obvious exception is where you have developed the appendix items: questionnaire, original tables, etc. Your appendix(es) will usually come after the body and after the list of references.

8. Use References and use them correctly. A paper/project without references, or with skimpy or incorrect references, is unacceptable. Readers need to know where you got your information and where they can turn to verify that information or get additional information. Use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition citation and referencing style. When in doubt consult the Rutgers website on paper writing.
9. **Use a clear, functional style of writing.** Unless specifically instructed otherwise, your paper/project should have the clear, functional style of an administrative report rather than the stilted, verbose style of an academic paper. {And even academic articles, books, etc. are now more likely to have a clear, down-to-earth style.} Clear, functional writing means following the guidelines in Garnett Chapter 3: Guidelines for More Readable Writing (on Sakai Resources site).

PLEASE NOTE THAT A PAPER/PROJECT THAT FAILS TO FOLLOW THE TEN GUIDELINES COVERED IN THIS HANDBOOK OR FAILS TO INCORPORATE COURSE CONTENT WILL BE RETURNED UNGRADED AND WILL ONLY BE GRADED WHEN IT MEETS THESE STANDARDS.
About the Author

James L. Garnett bio

email