

Effective Communication in Public Administration PUBA 605

Course Description

Public administrators have had to withstand significant changes in their environments, learn about how to work among the rapid advances in managerial and communication technologies, and the increasing demands and expectations of their performance. Communication is one of the key areas of knowledge and skill public sector leaders need to know about to succeed.

This course is designed to equip students with fundamental knowledge and skills widely regarded to be necessary for effectively communicate in the public sector. The course focuses on the foundations of communication, the various levels and contexts of public sector communication, essential skills such as presenting orally, writing effectively, holding meetings, leading and managing groups and handling the challenges for effective communication such as those common in diverse and multi-cultural settings.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify and practice key communication tools, such as writing and oral presentation skills;

- Identify and practice inter-organizational and inter-personal communication best practices;

- Identify and analyze potential barriers to effective communication in the public sector and describe several strategies/techniques for avoiding or overcoming each barrier;

- Describe commonalities and differences among key different levels of communication: interpersonal, group/team, organizational, and inter-organizational;

- Identify and describe standard media for communicating in and among organizations;

- Describe the roles new communications technologies perform and the upsides and downsides of using these technologies.

Required Text

James L. Garnett, *Communicating for Results in Government: A Strategic Approach for Public Managers*. Jossey-Bass, 1994. [Somewhat dated in examples and discussions of technology but still useful on strategic communication planning and crucial types of communicating]

Assessment

2 Papers	30% (15% each)
2 Mini-presentations	30% (15% each)
In-class Presentation	25%

Presentation feedback	5%
<u>Weekly Participation and Attendance</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

Weekly attendance and participation

Your job in this class is to thoughtfully examine course materials and engage fully in course-related activities, discussions and assignments. Your attendance is expected at each session. If you must miss class for any reason, please contact me. I appreciate your avoidance of distracting practices such as late entrances, early exits, ringing cell phones, web browsing, texting, conversations, and other activities unrelated to the class. This behavior is especially important given that the beginning of class sometimes features guest speakers. It also includes respecting the viewpoints and experiences of your classmates, professors, and the guest speakers.

Course Schedule

Part 1: Building the Foundation

Session 1: Why Study Communication in Public Administration?

- Garnett, Chapter 1: “Why Communication is So Crucial to Government Success.”
- Garnett, J.L. and Kouzmin, A. 2007. Communicating Throughout Katrina: Competing and Complementary Conceptual Lenses on Crisis Communication. *Public Administration Review*, 67(s1): 171-188.
- Liu, B.F., and Levenshus, A.B. 2012. “Opportunities, challenges and trends in US federal government communication.” In *Government Communication: Cases and Challenges*, Eds. K. Sanders and M.J. Canel. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. pp 59-78.
- Pandey, S.K. and Garnett, J.L. 2006. Exploring Public Sector Communication Performance: Testing a model and drawing implications. *Public Administration Review*, 66(1): 37-51.

Session 2: Communication Principles and Strategies

- Garnett, Chapter 2: “Recognizing and Overcoming Barriers to Effective Communication.”
- Garnett, Chapter 3: “Applying a Strategic Model to Government Communication.”
- Riccucci, Rainey, and Thompson. 2006. Leadership and the transformation of a major institution: Charles Rossotti and the Internal Revenue Service. *Public Administration Review*, 66(4): 596-604.
- Kumuyi, W.F. 2010. “Seven Communication Tips an Effective Leader Must Have.” In *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Nonprofit and Public Leadership*. Ed. J.L. Perry. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Pp409-418.
- Cahn, D.D. and Abigail, R.A. 2014. “Communication Options in Conflict.” In *Managing Conflict through Communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon

Part II: Developing Effective Working Relationships through Communication

Session 3: Active Listening; Emotional Intelligence

- Dewine, S. 2000. "Isn't Anyone Listening? Using Active Listening Techniques." In *The Consulting Craft: Improving Organizational Communication, 2nd ed.* New York: St. Martin's Press. Pp188-205.
- Stivers, C. 1994. The Listening Bureaucrat: Responsiveness in Public Administration, *Public Administration Review*, 54(4): 364-369.
- Berman, E.M. and West, J.P. 2008. Emotional Intelligence in U.S. Cities: A Study of Social Skills among Public Managers. *Public Administration Review*, 68(4): 742-758.
- 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=HNYXQoYM93E&NR=1> (part 2 showing the Emotional Intelligence of President Barack Obama)

Session 4: Personal and Interpersonal Communication

- Garnett, Chapter 4: "Relating to Administrative Superiors and Elected Officials."
- Mor Barak, M.E. 2014. "Interpersonal Relationships in a Global Work Context." In *Managing Diversity: Toward a Globally Inclusive Workplace, 3rd edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Pp197-214.
- Cohen, S., Eimicke, W., and Heikkila, T. 2013. "Developing Effective Working Relationships." In *The Effective Public Manager.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp75-89.

Session 5: Group and Team Communication

- Garnett, Chapter 5: "Strengthening Exchanges with Subordinates."
- Bryson, J.M. and Anderson, S.R. 2000. Applying Large-Group Interaction Methods in the Planning and Implementation of Major Change Efforts. *Public Administration Review*, 60(2): 143-162.
- Jensen, J.L. 2007. Getting One's Way in Policy Debates: Influence Tactics Used in Group Decision-Making Settings. *Public Administration Review*, 67(2): 216-227.
- Rainey, Hal G. 2014. "Managing Groups, Communication, and Conflict in Organizations." In *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations, 5th ed.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp398-401.
- Dewine, S. 2000. "Can This Group Work as a Team? Team building techniques." In *The Consulting Craft: Improving Organizational Communication, 2nd ed.* New York: St. Martin's Press. Pp284-303.

Session 6: Organizational Communication

- Rainey, Hal G. 2014. "Communications in Organizations" In *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations, 5th ed.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp391-394.

- Garnett, J.L., Marlowe, J., and Pandey, S.K. 2008. Penetrating the Performance Predicament: Communication as a Mediator or Moderator of Organizational Culture's Impact on Public Organizational Performance. *Public Administration Review*, 68(2): 266-281.
- Graber, D.A. 2002. "Building Information Bases: Resources and Obstacles." In *The Power of Communication: Managing Information in Public Organizations*. Washington, DC: CQ Press. Pp25-63.
- Graber, D.A. 2002. "Channeling Bureaucratic Information Flows." In *The Power of Communication: Managing Information in Public Organizations*. Washington, DC: CQ Press. 64-92.

Session 7: Inter-organizational Communication

- Garnett, Chapter 6: "Improving Relations with Colleagues and other Agencies."
- Vangen, S. and Winchester, N. 2014. Managing cultural diversity in collaborations: A focus on management tensions. *Public Management Review*, 16(5): 686-707.
- Lecy, J.D., Mergel, I.A., and Schmitz, H.P. 2014. Networks in Public Administration: Current scholarship in Review. *Public Management Review*, 16(5): 643-665.
- McGuire, M. 2006. Collaborative Public Management: Assessing What we Know and How we Know It. *Public Administration Review*, Special December Issue: 33-43.
- Ospina, S. and Yaroni, A, 2003. Understanding Cooperative Behavior in Labor Management Cooperation" A Theory-Building Exercise. *Public Administration Review*, 63(4): 455-471.
- Page, S. 2004. Measuring Accountability for Results in Interagency Collaboratives." *Public Administration Review*, 64(5): 591-606.

Session 8: Communication with Different "Publics"

- Cohen, S., Eimicke, W., and Heikkila, T. 2013. "Communicating with the Media, Stakeholders, and the Public." In *The Effective Public Manager*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, Terence. 2012. "Government Communication in Singapore." In *Government Communication: Cases and Challenges*, Eds. K. Sanders and M.J. Canel. pp 241-258. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Bingham, L.B., Nabatchi, T. and O'Leary, R. 2005. The New Governance: Practices and Processes for Stakeholder and Citizen Participation in the work of Government. *Public Administration Review*, 65(5): 547-558.
- Baker, W.H., Addams, H.L., and Davis, B. 2005. Critical Factors for Enhancing Municipal Public Hearings. *Public Administration Review*, 65(4): 490-499.
- Nelson, L. 2002. Protecting the Common Good: Technology, Objectivity, and Privacy. *Public Administration Review*, 62(s1): 69-73.

Session 9: Communicating Online and through Social Media

- Mergel, I.A. 2013. Social Media Adoption And Resulting Tactics In The U.S. Federal Government. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(2): 123-130.

- Mergel, I.A. 2013. A Three-Stage Adoption Process for Social Media Use in Government. *Public Administration Review*, 73(3): 390-400.
- Bovens, M., and Zouridis, S. 2002. From Street-Level to System-Level Bureaucracies: How Information and Communication Technology is Transforming Administrative Discretion and Constitutional Control. *Public Administration Review*, 62(2): 174-184.
- Scott, J. K. 2006. “E” the people: Do US municipal government web sites support public involvement? *Public Administration Review*, 66(3): 341-353.
- Tolbert, C. J., Mossberger, K., and McNeal, R. 2008. Institutions, Policy Innovation, and E-Government in the American States. *Public Administration Review*, 68(3): 549-563.

Part III. Specific Communication Skills

Session 10: Presenting Convincingly

- Dewine, S. 2000. “When Your Client Asks: ‘How Can I face This Audience?’” In *The Consulting Craft: Improving Organizational Communication*, 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin’s Press. pp242-271.
- Garnett, Chapter 11: “Briefing and Speaking Skills.”

Session 11: Holding effective meetings

- Garnett, Chapter 9: Skills for Effective Government Meetings
- Baker, W. H., Addams, H. L., and Davis, B. 2005. Critical Factors For Enhancing Municipal Public Hearings. *Public Administration Review*, 65(4): 490-499.
- John Cleese (Monty Python) training video: “Meetings, Bloody Meetings”

Session 12: Writing skills (organization, style, tone, and analysis)

- Garnett, Chapter 3: “Guidelines for More Readable Writing”
- Garnett, Chapter 4: “Organizing Your Writing to Get Results.”
- Garnett, Chapter 5: “Creating Appropriate Tone.”
- Garnett, Chapter 6: “Putting Sound Analysis into Government Writing and 8: “Writing Government Reports.”
- Lidman, R., and Sommers, P. 2005. The “Compleat” Policy Analyst: A Top 10 List. *Public Administration Review*, 65(5): 628-634.

Part IV: Special Challenges for Communicating

Session 13: Cross-Cultural Communication

- Mor Barak, M.E. 2014. “Culture and Communication in the Global Workplace.” In *Managing Diversity: Toward a Globally Inclusive Workplace*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Pp175-196.
- Merkin, R., Taras, V., and Steel, P. 2014. State Of The Art Themes In Cross-Cultural Communication Research: A Systematic And Meta-Analytic Review. *International Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 38: 1-23.

- Scherer, K.R., Clark-Poiner, E., and Martillaro, M. 2011. In The Eye Of The Beholder: Universality And Cultural Specificity In The Expression And Perception Of Emotion. *International Journal of Psychology*, 46(6): 401-435.

Sessions 14 and 15: Wrap up and Presentations

Assignment descriptions

Papers (2 papers, 15% each; 30%)

Paper 1: Think about the organizational communication where you are employed, volunteer or at school. 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?

Paper 2: Identify and describe 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).

Mini presentations (2 at 15% each; 30%)

Students will select two topics related to the course near the beginning of the semester (e.g. group communication, communicating online, etc.) and prepare and deliver a 5 minute presentation to the class. The presentation will be scheduled for the same week that topic is being discussed in class. Students will sign up for these presentation topics on the Wiki on Lulima. There will only be 4 presentation slots available each week.

Presentation (25%)

The Presentation assignment requires you to prepare and deliver a talk from 8 to 10 minutes in length to the class.

We will video record your presentation so that you may observe yourself talking at a later time. While watching yourself give a presentation may seem uncomfortable, it’s a tremendously valuable way to assess your public speaking style and skills.

Topic and Approach

The topic is restricted to one that interests you and is of interest to those in the public sector; making it interesting to us will mean applying as many of the "Public Speaking Made Easy" strategies and skills as you can. Your fellow students are your audience. You may choose to inform us on something by describing or explaining it in ways that would give us [as you might anticipate] helpful and enriching information on an interesting subject. Or you may attempt to persuade us by trying to convince us of something; your target in this case would be changing or reinforcing attitudes and beliefs.

It's important to remember that these two goals are inseparable. To inform us you must persuade us, to a degree, that the information you offer is worthwhile and relevant. To persuade us you must offer information that provides a context for, and supports, your point of view. Your choice between informing and persuading depends on which of these

two is the core reason for your presentation: Do you want to provide us with information, or do you wish to influence our attitudes and/or beliefs?

Presentation Feedback (5%)

It's very important that you receive feedback from several people on your presentation. So we will be assigning as many as three of your fellow classmates, acting as "coaches", to provide you with reactions and suggestions on your speaking. We plan for you to use the Presentation Feedback Guide for Coaches as a basis for this feedback. Everyone will benefit from this process.

General Strategies for this Presentation

Rather than reading from a manuscript or notecards, speak from an outline or notes at most. Doing so will enable you to engage in much more of a "conversation" than a "speech" in your presentation, which is more appropriate to the relationships you are building with your fellow class mates.

If you use PowerPoint, don't let the technology distract you from interacting with your audience; talk with us rather than reading from the screen in back of you.

Above all, be yourself; have fun sharing something you would like to talk about with people who you're getting to know better.