



The Leader's Voice: Communicating To Lead Organizations

Half-Term Course offering one section in each both A and B term, Summer 2014

A Term: Tuesdays, 2:45pm - 7:00pm (room TBD)

**B Term: Mondays, 9:00am – 1:15pm (room TBD)

****Important Note for B Term:** *I will be away Monday, July 21st so there will be no class. We will hold a makeup class on either Wednesday, July 30th from 2:45-7:00pm or on Friday, August 1st from 9am-1:15pm. You need to be able to attend the makeup class.*

PROFESSOR NAME: Brad Aspel

Professor Office Location: 206 Uris

E-mail: ba2120@columbia.edu

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL

- Please buy Duarte, HBR Guide to Persuasive Presentations
- Other required readings are provided via Canvas
 - Recommended Additional Purchase: *Guide to Presentations* by Lynn Russell and Mary Munter

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Leadership roles involve a wide range of communication challenges—sharing your vision in a way that sticks, mentoring a colleague through a challenge, rallying demoralized employees, working the room at an industry event, handling tough questions from the media, running meetings in ways that elicit candid conversation and learning.

The goal of this class is to introduce you to concepts and best practices, as well as to offer a safe place to practice. While you will have opportunities to practice public speaking in various forms, this class will also discuss frameworks and the challenges of different types of communication.

The world is full of communication experts: salespersons, actors, screenwriters, political speechwriters, coaches, networkers, public relations experts, diplomats and so forth. When we watch an expert in action, it is tempting to attribute their performance to a mystical gift that the rest of us lack. Yet success in any of these fields most often owes more to method than magic. What looks to us like spontaneous eloquence typically results from applying frameworks and focused practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This class looks to various communication professions for tools and methods that can help business leaders face their communication challenges. We aim to develop two kinds of knowledge—conceptual understanding and procedural skill. Each session will convey frameworks for particular kinds of communication and some active exercises for practicing them. We rely on role-play simulations and

personalized feedback (from peers and through video) to hone behavioral skills. Each student will also have the opportunity to receive direct coaching feedback from the Professor on their particular communication and presence.

The topics we will cover in class are:

- Storytelling: Making a Point Memorable
- Coaching: Chats that Change People
- Public Speaking: Moving a Crowd
- Troubleshooting & Other Communication Areas (e.g. e-mail, powerpoint)
- Networking & Building Relationships

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Class Participation: 50%

Final Project: 50%

Participation & Individual Class Pre-Assignments (50%): To be in the class, you must be present in the first class and arrive prepared. It will not be possible to add the course if you do not participate in the first session. Given that the exercises are central to the learning, missing any of the subsequent sessions without an excuse will lower your grade. Participation will be evaluated by your preparedness and your contribution to the learning of your classmates, not based on your performance in the communication exercises. You will be graded on how well you prepared for each class (readings and any class-specific assignments announced during the course) as well as the level of your participation in each class. Part of this grade will include your 2 minute presentation to the full class, with the focus on how well you had prepared, how much you were able to implement class learnings to date, and your willingness to take feedback and adjust. Some outside small assignments are also rolled into this part of your grade.

Final Assignment (50%): There are four parts to your final assignment:

Self-Assessment (2 parts): You will grade yourself on your own development as well as on your ability to coach those within your coaching group (including the coaching assessment you give to those in your coaching group)

Coaching Group Assessment: Graded by peers in your coaching group on the development of your ability to coach others as well as their assessment of how you developed during the course

Presentation: At some point before the end of the course, you need to be observed by someone in your coaching group giving a presentation (audience >6)

Action Plan: This will be something you will write up and turn in by May 6 that will include thoughts, assessment and implement of feedback (including 360, coaching group peers, other classmates) and class learnings.

There will not be a final exam for this course