Professional Communication

The Professional Communication certification is intended for use primarily in academic settings including secondary and post-secondary, but could also be used for candidates who need to upskill to enter the workforce. These candidates may be in government or development institutions and programs, or they may be individuals looking to become more employable on their own.

An individual earning this certification has approximately 150 hours of instruction and handson experience. Individuals who have earned the Professional Communication certification have demonstrated expertise of the following skills.

1. Describe Basic Communication Principles

1.1 Identify professional communication skills

May include differentiating between professional and unprofessional behaviors; recognizing a professional email address; cultivating an appropriate social media presence including profile information, posts, photos, and videos; describing professional time-management skills including punctuality, attendance, and notification.

1.2 Identify effective verbal, nonverbal, and listening skills

May include basic delivery standards such as facing the audience or speaker and making eye contact; communicating a message or feedback through nonverbal methods; moderating intonation, rate, tone, volume, and enunciation; keeping your attention on the message; deferring judgment.

2. Plan for Effective Communication

2.1 Analyze the effect of the audience on a message

May include identifying the audience data required to craft an effective message; analyzing audience demographics such as age, education, gender, marital status, race, religion, and other statistical factors by which population is measured.

2.2 Analyze the effect of the environment on a message

May include in-person vs. remote, audience size, room size, available equipment.

2.3 Given a communication scenario, identify the specific purpose

May include identifying the primary message you need to deliver; distinguishing between informative, persuasive, and motivational messages, differentiating between ethical, emotional, and logical persuasion.

2.4 Given a communication scenario, address ethical and legal issues

May include defining and identifying issues related to accessibility, attribution, bias-free communication, confidentiality, copyright, trademark, and plagiarism; responding to requests for data, identifying biased communication terminology, ensuring that presentations and documents comply with accessibility standards, removing personal information from presentations and documents.

2.5 Given a business scenario, select the most appropriate communication medium

May include verbal messages such as face-to-face discussions, phone calls, and voice messages; written messages such as emails, text messages, business letters, job applications, resumes, and meeting agendas and minutes; visual messages such as PowerPoint presentations and videos; business-related social media messages using services such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

2.6 Effectively outline and summarize your message

May include creating a complete and concise outline; outlining messages; summarizing your planned message.

3. Apply Best Practices for Creating Business Deliverables

3.1 Assemble accurate business communication deliverables

May include creating business communications such as business letters, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and resumes from components; analyzing the effectiveness of different forms of business communications; using spelling and grammar tools.

3.2 Apply visual design standards to business communications

May include identifying design principles of business communications such as balance, proximity, alignment, repetition, contrast, space, rule of thirds, font choice, color choice, and white space; distinguishing among effective and ineffective visual designs for common forms of business communications such as presentation slides, email messages, and documents.

3.3 Identify effective uses of data visualization to present complex information

May include types of data visualization such as graphs, charts, plots, and infographics; accurate visual representation of data; interpreting the message of a data visualization graphic.

4. Deliver Your Message

4.1 Describe the variables involved in delivering an effective message

May include personal presentation such as attire and hygiene; environmental variables such as location, physical space, technology, and formality; and issues such as regional language variations, imprecise language, jargon, context, and perceptions.

4.2 Identify methods of adapting a message based on audience feedback

May include direct feedback; indirect feedback such as body language.

5. Receive Communications

5.1 Given a business communication, restate the key points of the message

May include identifying the primary goal of a specific communication; summarizing verbal or written messages.

5.2 Given a message, identify appropriate responses or clarifying questions

May include responding to and clarifying messages.

6. Analyze Communication Scenarios

6.1 Analyze important factors of obtaining employment

May include identifying common mistakes made by interviewers and applicants, distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate job application documents.

6.2 Analyze expressions of and responses to feedback

May include giving constructive criticism, receiving constructive and destructive criticism, seeking feedback, setting and clarifying expectations, and modeling correct behavior as a feedback method.

6.3 Analyze communication etiquette within a business hierarchy

May include communications with supervisors, peers, and subordinates; ollaborating with a group.

6.4 Given a customer service request, identify the problem, solution, and appropriate action

May include identifying and restating the problem, identifying the customer's desired solution and the available solutions, and interfacing with team members and customers.