

# Communicating for Impact Overview

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# Communicating for Impact Overview

## Course Description

Communicating for Impact is McKinsey Academy's flagship communications course offering aimed at helping people become more effective and influential communicators in their organizations. The goals of the course are to help you move people to action based on four key steps of the EPIC approach to communications:

- 1) **Empathy:** Put yourself in the other person's shoes to understand their perspective
- 2) **Purpose:** Define the purpose to include their needs and yours
- 3) **Insight:** Articulate your ideas in a clear and compelling way
- 4) **Conversation:** Plan and orchestrate the flow of an effective two-way conversation

These steps can be applied to any written and verbal communications, and with practice can be applied to both quick, daily interactions and more extensive communications planning.

In this course, you'll benefit from the expertise of McKinsey Communication Expert and faculty member, Kate Aquila—and a diverse set of McKinsey experts from around the world.

## Section 1: Introduction

Recognize the value of good communications and learn a simple framework to help guide your interactions

- Articulate why a thoughtful approach to communications can strengthen your ability to have impact
- Describe how you can use the EPIC framework to help increase the effectiveness of your interactions

## Section 2: Connect with your audience

Learn to take the perspective of your audience in order to build a strong foundation for your communications

- Recognize the role empathy plays in your communications
- Identify the value of cultivating trust-based relationships and describe behaviors that build those relationships

- Identify best practices for using inclusive communications and identify some common unconscious biases

## Section 3: Orient toward an objective

Think strategically about the purpose of your interaction and tailor your purpose to best achieve shared objectives

- Define the purpose of an interaction to include your needs and your audience's
- Differentiate how specific communications will impact an audience and select the most effective type of communication for a given scenario

## Section 4: Structure an argument

Structure a piece of communication using the Pyramid Principle, lead with a robust governing thought, and synthesize information to emphasize the 'so what'

- Use the Pyramid Principle to organize and structure your communication in a clear and compelling way
- Distinguish synthesis from summary and generate insights from a synthesis of facts
- Construct logically sound arguments using insights that support your articulated purpose

## Section 5 – Develop a storyline

Convert your structured argument into a compelling storyline that captures your audience's attention and create a storyboard that outlines the visuals you'll use to share your content

- Create and tailor a storyline to communicate your message in a compelling way to your audience
- Articulate how to bring your storyline to life with different media, materials and visualizations

## Section 6 – Craft inspiring communications

Inspire an audience to action by infusing your message (e.g., email, memo, team meeting) with words and imagery that resonate with your audience

- Apply stylistic and rhetorical techniques to crafting your message that will inspire your audience and move them to action
- Understand how every interaction, meeting or presentation, is really a *conversation with* other people

- Describe how stories inspire us and why they are such a powerful communication device
- Apply the principles of storytelling to structure your message and create an emotional connection with your audience

## **Section 7 – Deliver communications with style**

Bring a message to life during delivery both in-person and virtually with techniques to tell an engaging story (e.g., physical presence, vocal emphasis)

- Recognize how your delivery can be used to inspire the audience to action or to take a point of view
- Enrich your delivery by using physical presence, vocal emphasis, and emotional connection

## **Section 8 – Facilitate an active discussion**

Facilitate and lead a conversation in an inclusive and open environment both virtually and in-person

- Use techniques to create an inclusive and open environment in a discussion
- Apply a range of facilitation skills to help move a group to alignment, commitment, and action

You will explore these topics through video presentations by Kate as well as other McKinsey experts. You'll practice these skills in interactive exercises. Throughout the course, you'll also have opportunities to reflect on what you have learned and to plan how you will apply these skills on the job. Finally, we have curated additional resources to help you dive deeper into topics that interest you.