The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	ENGL1A25
Subject Title	Effective, Task-Oriented Professional Communication
Credit Value	3
Level	1
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Exclusion: ENGL2A10 [Remarks: ENGL students may take this subject.]
Objectives	This subject emphasizes practical communication strategies in achieving effective communication and successful completion of tasks in modern-day workplaces. The goal is to help students develop and mature through an understanding of the power of language which permeates all aspects of our lives, especially in navigating the professional world after graduation. This subject aims to use language and communication as a cornerstone to investigate how individuals make sense of the world in which they live and work; how they acquire knowledge, the biases they bring to this knowledge, and the role of each person's unique sociohistorical contexts that shape their understanding of reality. The subject highlights communication theory to unpack issues around intercultural diversity, workplace hierarchies, and also stereotypes and biases. Importantly, it explicitly explores how individuals communicate and negotiate relationships in their workplace and in their professional lives. It has relevance for all students entering the professional workforce and, irrespective of their chosen professions (engineering, accountancy or nursing) provides them with skills to negotiate and manage work and relationships. Specifically: - Students will be introduced to a framework that explains the theory behind effective interpersonal communication skills and how social identity influences interpersonal communication and completion of tasks. - Students will actively engage in effective verbal and non-verbal skills in relation to the expression, listening, monitoring and evaluating components of interpersonal communication as it occurs in the workplace and in their personal lives. - Students will learn to work more effectively in diverse group settings. - Students will use role-play to apply the theory learned in lectures, and the skills developed in tutorials, to everyday scenarios and

	experiences. • Students will gain insights into the effective use of communication skills in aspects of interpersonal conflict both in the workplace and in other contexts. • Given the diverse and multicultural world in which we live in the 21st century, students will reflect on the complexities of inter-cultural communication in organizational and personal relationships. • To consolidate learnings, they will examine theory and research in specific organizational settings such as, but not limited to, office communication, caregiver-patient interaction, negotiations, and technical (online and technology-mediated) communication.
Intended Learning Outcomes *(Note 1)*	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: a) Develop awareness of the motivations and cognitions that influence human behaviour, b) Have the ability to critically appraise communication and social psychology theory that explains aspects of human behaviour, c) Effectively evaluate workplace and other situations where highly developed communication skills are essential for successful outcomes, d) Manage diverse group and team situations to achieve required key performance indicators, e) Attain improved communication skills for use in difficult workplace situations as well as day-to-day living, f) An understanding of the psychological mechanisms that explain how the 'self' seeks to impress on others and how the 'self' perceives others, g) Acquire a good understanding of communication with diverse populations (intercultural, cross cultural and minority groups) h) Fulfill the CAR reading and writing requirements in English.

Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus
 	
(Note 2)
	1. **What is professional communication?**
	  a) Defining what communication is,
	  b) How communication theory describes conveying messages verbally and non-verbally from a sender to a receiver in the simple transmission model,
	  c) How different communication theories explain communication and perceptions,
	  d) Applying this knowledge to professional practice.
	2. **Tasks and verbal and non-verbal communication**
	  a) Defining non-verbal communication,
	  b) Classification of non-verbal behaviour (e.g., Kinesics, Proxemics, Chronemics, Haptics, and Vocalics),
	  c) Relative importance of non-verbal and verbal communication, and how context matters,
	  d) The power of verbal communication,
	  c) Bringing verbal and non-verbal communication together,
	3. **Working and communicating in groups**
	  a) Groups and teams – how they differ,

	b) Group and team formation,
	c) Group dynamics and the role of individuals in groups and teams,
	d) How to create and manage effective groups and teams in professional practice.

4. Conflict resolution, management skills, and workplace relationships
  a) A model of conflict and the associated stages and responses to conflict,
  b) Adapting different conflict management styles according to the situations faced.
  c) Effective management of difficult relationships at work and at home

5. Intercultural communication
  a) Defining culture and communication
  b) The role of language (verbal and non-verbal) in   intercultural relations,
  c) Dimensions of culture and their relevance to effective management,
  d) Managing diverse intercultural groups in the workplace.

6. Bringing it all together
  a) General reflections on what the students have learned over the semester with specific examples drawn from real-life and research to demonstrate communication dilemmas.
  b) Discussion of each of the examples and what we have learned in this subject to explain the issues presented.

Teaching/Learning Methodology

(Note 3)

1. Lectures (with required set reading for each week)
2. Analysis of video material
3. Group discussions
4. In-class presentations
5. Discussion forum on Blackboard or social media platforms

There will be several different learning stimuli. We will have some lecture content, but the students will have been provided with a basic reading to assist them.

Some videos will be shown to illustrate communication skills and problems.

There will be break-out sessions in class to discuss issues raised.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

(Note 4)

Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	
1. In-class (oral) group presentations	20%	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	
2. Participation in mini in-class quizzes and in-class role-plays	15%	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	

3. Written assignment	40%	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☑	
4. Multiple choice test	25%	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	
Total	100 %									

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

In-class group presentations enable the students to learn how to work together and practice spoken communication in English. Students often encounter difficulties with group-work, but this is part of the intended learning outcome as they reflect on how they managed the challenges within the group. The presentation will require that the students choose a short video clip to demonstrate some aspect of miscommunication. They will also need to conduct a small literature review to support their presentation. The presentation will be 15 minutes. The readings form 5% of the ER requirement. For presentations to be successful, the students must research additional readings that will inform the presentation and reflect extended learning beyond the recommended texts.

The mini-quizzes are implemented to ensure students attend each class and have completed the required readings for that specific week. It is aimed to test their comprehension of the readings. The readings for the weekly quiz form 10% of the ER requirement. The mini-quiz will be conducted at the beginning of each lecture. The questions can only be answered successfully upon completion of that reading, without relying on exposition by the instructors before the assessments.

The role-plays in class will provide the students with active learning allowing them to gain necessary communication skills. Participation in role-plays is essential.

Concise and clear articulation of what each student has learnt throughout the subject will be achieved through the written assignment. This will be in an essay form, serving as the EW component of the subject. It will comprise a) personal reflection with respect to the subject and the learnings achieved and b) it will also include answering a question about barriers and facilitators of communication. The essay will be developed over two drafts, the first of which will be in the form of a planning template and responses to guiding questions.

Multiple choice tests the broad range of information provided in the class and again tests that the students have completed the required readings. The questions in the multiple choice represent topics which have not been tested in other forms of assessment. The readings for the multiple choice form 10% of the ER requirement. Students can only answer the multiple-choice questions successfully upon completion of a comprehensive reading, of the recommended texts and cannot rely on exposition by the instructors before the assessments.

| **Student Study** | Class contact: | |

Effort Expected	▪ Lectures (13 x 2 hours)	26 Hrs.
	▪ Seminars/Tutorials (1 x 13 hours)	13 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Individual and Group Study	26 Hrs.
	▪ Written Assignment	26 Hrs.
	▪ Private Study	26 Hrs
	Total student study effort	117 Hrs.
Reading List and References	**Required Readings** Bernadette Vine (2020). *Introducing Language in the Workplace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ray Archee, Myra Gurney, Terry Mohan (2013). *Communicating as Professionals*, 3rd Edition, Cengage Publishing Chapters taken from this text are as follows Chapter 1: Communicating theory and professional practice (26 pages) Chapter 3: Non-verbal communication: meanings without words (25 pages) Chapter 4: Intercultural communication (24 pages) Chapter 5: Mediated communication (35 pages) Chapter 7: Concepts and applications in interpersonal communication (32 pages) Chapter 8: Communicating in groups and teams to achieve professional goals (28 pages) Julia T. Wood (2016). *Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters*, 8th Edition, Cengage Publishing Chapters taken from this text are as follows Chapter 6: Mindful Listening (23 pages) Chapter 8: Communication Climate: The Foundation of Personal Relationships (23 pages) Chapter 9: Managing Conflict in Relationships (28 pages) Can You Listen to Me? Building Practical Skills for Effective Listening **(**2016) *Anne Pisarski & Glenda Waring (*112 pages) https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/can-you-listen-to-me/id1125618852?mt=11 **Further readings** Aharon, T., & Lily, C.-H. (2012). Perspectives on Groups and Work Teams in the Workplace. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 28*(1), 51-66. doi:10.5093/tr2012a5 Allison, S., & Herlocker, C. (1994). Constructing Impressions in Demographically Diverse Organizational Settings A Group Categorization Analysis. *The American Behavioral Scientist (1986-1994), 37*(5), 637. doi:10.1177/0002764294037005005 Angouri, J. (2014). Multilingualism in the workplace: Language practices in multilingual contexts. *Multilingua, 33*(1), 1-9. doi:10.1515/multi-2014-0001 Derek, H. (2016). Workplace Discrimination. *Wisconsin Law Journal*.

Fox, S., & Lituchy, T. R. (2012). *Gender and the Dysfunctional Workplace*. Cheltenham: Cheltenham : Edward Elgar.

Hogg, M. A., Van Knippenberg, D., & Rast, I. D. E. (2012). Intergroup leadership in organizations: leading across group and organizational boundaries. *Academy of Management Review, 37*(2), 232-255. doi:10.5465/amr.2010.0221

Mayfield, J., & Mayfield, M. (2017). Leadership Communication. *International Journal of Business Communication, 54*(1), 3-11. doi:10.1177/2329488416675446

Patterson, M. L. (2012). *Nonverbal Communication*: Elsevier Inc.

Richardson, B., Taylor, P., Snook, B., Conchie, S. M., & Bennell, C. (2014). Language Style Matching and Police Interrogation Outcomes. *Law Hum. Behav., 38*(4), 357-366. doi:10.1037/lhb0000077

Sánchez-Vidal, M. A. E., Cegarra-Leiva, D., & Cegarra-Navarro, J. G. (2012). Gaps between managers' and employees' perceptions of work–life balance. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23*(4), 645-661. doi:10.1080/09585192.2011.561219

Simon, E. (2016). Variety of skills, traits combine to create a good leader. *Hotel Management, 231*(10), 48.

Sterling, E., Bravo, A., Porzecanski, A. L., Burks, R. L., Linder, J., Langen, T., . . . Bynum, N. (2016). Think before (and after) you speak: practice and self-reflection bolster oral communication skills.(RESEARCH and TEACHING)(Report). *Journal of College Science Teaching, 45*(6), 87.

Ting-Toomey, S. (2010). Applying Dimensional Values in Understanding Intercultural Communication. *Communication Monographs, 77*(2), 169-180. doi:10.1080/03637751003790428

Ying Liao, Y., Soltani, E., Wang, W.-Y., & Iqbal, A. (2016). The dynamics of workplace relationships in a diverse internationally staffed organisation: a qualitative ethnographic assessment. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-30. doi:10.1080/09585192.2016.1166788

Zeidner, M., & Kloda, I. (2013). Emotional intelligence (EI), conflict resolution patterns, and relationship satisfaction: Actor and partner effects revisited. *Personality and Individual Differences, 54*(2), 278-283. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2012.09.013

Revised by Tobias Lee, August 2023

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes
Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus
The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology
This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4:Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.