



**400 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

<b>Who Should Attend</b>	<b>Benefits of attending</b>
<b>Internal Auditors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A thorough understanding of the art of communication</li><li>• Build full understanding of the key skills required.</li><li>• Appreciate the most up to date techniques</li><li>• Learn 200 ways to improve your verbal communication skills</li><li>• 50 ways to improve team working</li><li>• 50 ways to improve your presentations</li><li>• 100 practical ways to improve your written reports</li></ul>
<b>Risk Managers</b>	
<b>External Auditors</b>	
<b>Health and Safety managers</b>	
<b>Compliance officers</b>	
<b>Insurance Managers</b>	
<b>Other Assurance providers</b>	

**Dear Assurance Professional**

- **Do you communicate as effectively as you would like?**
- **Do your interpersonal skills help motivate and drive your team?**
- **Could your written reports have more impact?**
- **Could you create greater rapport with management?**
- **Could your efficiency be enhanced?**

**Attending this highly practical seminar will provide the opportunity to improve your interpersonal communication and presentational skills in order to make a substantial difference to the way you interact with colleagues and senior management**

**Energised by the need to provide broader assurance and to respond to new Corporate Governance requirements, many Internal Audit, Compliance, Health and Safety and Risk Management functions find they need to perform a much more comprehensive spectrum of work than ever before – whilst still providing comfort and reassurance that the basics are being managed well.**

**Practitioners have now to expand their role as facilitators and advisors at the same time demonstrating that they are adding measurable added value. The addition of internal consultancy into the Internal Audit role has introduced an entirely different dimension to this profession.**

**These responsibilities and challenges require a new set of skills, competencies and abilities. Strong communication and presentation skills are essential in this highly challenging environment, whether this is facilitating control self- assessment workshops or negotiating with management or communicating your ideas in the form of reports.**

**This exciting seminar features a series of case studies and practical exercises covering verbal, listening, written and other communication skills. Using video and peer review, you will have the opportunity to learn from fellow professionals as well as benefiting from the wide experience of your seminar leader Phil Griffiths.**

**Phil is a renowned expert in the assurance field, having worked with hundreds of such functions across the world. He will ensure that you take back practical and proven techniques to help you increase your personal impact and career prospects**

# Course Outline

## Day 1 The Art Of Effective Communication

### The need for effective communication

#### *Exercise 1 'The Bamboo Cane' - a thought provoking 'ice breaker*

- Assurance providers primary roles, objectives and challenges
- What are the keys to success?
- Expressing yourself effectively
- Do you have clients, auditees or customers?
- The need to have a customer relationship
- Creating rapport with your customers – tips and techniques
- The 4 management styles – Activists, Reflectors, Theorists and Pragmatists - and the implications for assurance professionals
- Personal drivers and success

#### *Exercise 2 – management styles - working in small groups delegates are asked to determine and compare individual management styles and personal drivers*

- Language and impact
- Simple and Complex language
- Use of English – keep it simple
- The use of 'powerwords' in your communications
- How to get on the same wavelength as your customer
- Phone conversations – how to make the right impression
- The use of humour
- Business Communication techniques
- Facilitation – the key skills

#### *Exercise 3 – Getting your message over – dealing with colleagues*

- What management expects
- Active listening
- Meetings and how to manage them – the 5 P's
- Body language and how to interpret it
- How to tell if you are not getting the true picture
- The secret of effective presentations

#### *Exercise 4 – making a short presentation (with video)*

## Day 2

# Communication with your customers

### The Skills required

- Results of recent surveys
- Outlining the broader range of skills needed
- How to carry out a skills inventory
- Facilitation skills – tips and techniques
- How to recruit personnel with the skills you need
- Achieving a blend of experience, competencies and innovation

#### *Exercise 5 The skills inventory*

### Corporate Governance and the Assurance Role

- The Corporate Governance challenges
- The tensions created for management
- The opportunities for Assurance professionals
- The converging role of the assurance providers
- How to coordinate activities across assurance providers
- Audit Committee relationships
- Relationships with external bodies
  
- A copy of Phil's acclaimed report 'Coordinating Assurance' will be provided to all delegates

#### *Exercise 6 – meeting with an Executive – role play*

### Preparing for an assignment

- Preparing for an assignment
- Objectives and risk
- Areas to cover
- Getting management input

#### *Exercise 7 Pre-meeting with management – role play*

### Completing an assignment

- Explaining the approach to staff of the function being audited
- Treating your customers with respect
- Building a picture of the system and processes
- Deciding who to interview
- Interviews

#### *Exercise 8 Assurance interview – role play*

- Testing – how to determine how much is necessary
- Walk through tests
- Fieldwork Techniques (compliance, transactional, analytical review, sampling etc)
- How to decide the depth of testing required
- Working papers
- The clearance meeting

*Exercise 9 – the clearance meeting – role play*

## **Day 3            Communicating in writing**

### **Assurance Reports – your shop window**

- Challenges of reporting
- Who are the reports really for?
- How do you know a good report when you see one?
- What Management expect – recent survey of chief executives
- The need for reports with impact

*Exercise 10 : What are the factors that distinguish an excellent report from the rest?*

### **The problems with reports**

- 25 questions about your reports
- The psychological problem with reports
- Why assurance reports are taken as a criticism of management
- What are the factors preventing the achievement of these best practice measures
- Tips, techniques and ideas to help you score 25 out of 25
- Discussion of the implications
- How to assess the needs of the audit customers
- Advice and guidance to help you achieve best practice
- Explanation of a proven method to evaluate your own reports

*Exercise 11 : Analysis of a real report (posted on the Internet)*

- Feedback and discussion

### **Best practice reports – the way forward**

- Key requirements of the audit report of the future
- How to draft a report with impact – discussion of banner headlines and their relative impact
- Highlighting the issues that matter
- How to get recipients to react positively

- How to write balanced reports
- How to get 95% of your recommendations actioned
- Title pages and indexes
- The Executive Summary –the benefits of writing the Executive summary before the main report.
- Influence and Persuasion

*Exercise 12 : Role play a meeting with senior management to discuss the report*

- Discussion of the implications – how to reflect the key issues in the Executive Summary
- Messages rather than content
- Outcomes rather than output
- Solutions not problems

*Exercise 13 Re-writing the Executive summary of one of your own reports*

## The main report

- Assignment Objectives
- Scope
- Forming and expressing the opinion
- Benefits and deliverables
- Conclusions
- The power of Senior management comments
- Words and phrases to avoid
- Best practice format
- Reducing the number of words
- The power of pictures and graphics
- The need to relate the issues to objectives and risk
- How to deal with sensitive issues in the report.
- Recommendations and actions
- Management Comments
- Action plans
- A Best practice report template will be shared

*Exercise 14 : Redrafting the objectives, scope, opinion and conclusions in the main body of the report*

## Day 4

# ***Communicating together and with Senior Management***

- Communicating as part of a team - the do's and don'ts
- 4 Practical and fun exercises with analysis and feedback – series of linked tasks requiring clear communication and understanding
- 5 minute presentations on the experience after each exercise (video and feedback)

*Exercise 15 Moonshot*

*Exercise 16 The Final Straw*

*Exercise 17 Building Rapport*

*Exercise 18 The Puzzle*

- The skills inventory – issues to concentrate on

All the following skills will be incorporated today:

- Diplomacy
- Open -mindedness
- Communication Skills – written, verbal, auditory, facilitation and presentation
- Persuasiveness
- Negotiation ability
- Self motivation and self confidence
- Decision making ability
- Flexibility and ability to co-operate
- Time management
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- Time management
- Judgement
- Analytical skills
- Self control
- Practicality
- Results orientation

### Interviewing skills

- What to look for in an investigative interview
- How to spot when someone is lying

**Exercise 19** A highly practical role play where delegates can experience an interview with someone suspected of malpractice

## **Day 5**      **Presentation skills**

### **Preparing a Presentation**

**Exercise 20 – Delegates prepare and deliver a 2 minute presentation on a subject of their choosing**

- Discussion of presentations and impact
- Determining the audience and preparing an appropriate approach
- The need for impact
- Deciding the form of presentation
- Use of visual aids
- How many notes should you use
- Use of humour – is this a good idea?
- Education or decision seeking – the different techniques

### **Delivering a presentation**

- How to combat nerves
- Keeping in control
- How to deal with questions
- Keeping the flow
- The need not to over prepare
- Use of simple language
- How to keep the audience's interest
- Use of props
- Anticipating the questions
- Considering what the audience will expect
- Assessing the results
- Getting feedback

### **Senior management presentations**

**Exercise 21 Delegates work in pairs and prepare a 5 minute presentation on a current business issue then present while being video-taped**

- Evaluation and feedback from the group
- Learning points discussed
- Development of personal action plans
- Course Summary