

CRAFT OF COMMUNICATION: *One to One Coaching*

This can help managers and executives with a wide range of communication difficulties. These often include:

- Issues around assertiveness and confidence
- Enhancing leadership skills.
- Dealing with conflict.
- Presenting to any kind of audience: peers, juniors or those more senior.
- General communication problems with clients, colleagues, whether peers, juniors or those more senior.
- Running meetings more effectively.
- Addressing large meetings.
- Q & A sessions.
- Facilitation skills with clients, colleagues or teams.
- One to One meetings with clients.
- Networking skills.
- Being more effective on the phone and in conference calls.
- Communicating well during interviews.
- Media training whether for Video conferencing or for TV interviews.
- Managing change and its consequences.
- Help for women managers and executives who need to communicate effectively, and to be authoritative and inclusive in a business environment where the leadership is male.
- Help with issues around Diversity.

All Craft of Communication courses are designed to meet the specific training needs of the client. Before the first session, there will have been extensive discussions with the client and/or others in the company to help define these needs precisely. After that, a coaching programme will be drawn up and discussed with the client.

THE SKILL BUILDING SESSION.

Craft of Communication coaching starts with a three hour skills session.

A: Content:

The first part of workshop begins with a series of practical exercises that help the coachee learn how their posture, body language, use of eye contact, breathing, and voice can affect both the image they project and the way they feel about themselves.

If there is a problem over confidence, we will explore how one can create a cycle which drains our confidence. With that knowledge, we then move on to techniques that put this cycle into reverse, building confidence and raising energy levels. All this helps to make it possible to be more assertive.

Next, the coachee is helped to make more efficient use of their voice. This is a vital part of this skill building session. They learn how to articulate arguments with greater clarity and eloquence by making subtle changes in the use of Pitch, Pace and Volume. Vocal problems like poor articulation, gabbling, underpowered voices, speaking too fast, etc can also be addressed.

Work on speaking inevitably opens up the subject of listening. The third phase of skill building focuses on Active Listening.

The starting point is breathing. Someone who is breathing too fast will find it hard to take in what others are saying. Moreover, one person's fast breathing can make others feel edgy. This is because speakers and listeners pick up and mimic each other's breathing. By breathing slower, a speaker can calm down a listener who, in turn, will become more receptive. The technique works reverse: the listener can, by slowing their breathing, help to calm the speaker, and others present. Which ever way it used, slower breathing helps a relationship to develop in a positive way.

Achieving this opens the way to using Active Listening. These skills include spotting keywords in the discourse of others, and taking in the way they talk as well as what they say.

B: Coaching Methods.

John Abulafia's workshops are all action: there are no lectures. One learns the techniques by using them. As the session develops, there is of course analysis, discussion and debate, as well as games and role-play. Worksheets are used to pinpoint key ideas.

Craft of Communication Skills sessions are always nuanced to address the specific needs of the coachee, taking into account their experience, level of confidence and the situations in which they face day to day.

The skill building session always focuses on those areas where a client feels they need to improve their skills. If they want to improve presentation skills, they will be asked them to bring a presentation of about 15 minutes, that they have given, usually give or plan to deliver. We will use that as the material for the session.

If they have problems with phone or conference calls, the breathing techniques and vocal skills can help them to acquire a calm confidence.

Sometimes, the difficulties are more personal. A coachee may have particular difficulty with specific people, kinds of people or certain types of situations. Again, we will bring all this into the skills session.

The session can be adapted to focus on whatever the coachee needs. If they are concerned about One to One Client meetings, the skills session will help them to:

- Maximise the impact they make when meeting a client.
- Manage the relationship with a client more effectively.
- Deal effectively with difficult clients.
- To use the voice to maximum effect in client meetings.
- To run meetings where a team is meeting the clients
- Facilitate discussions to maximum effect.
- Influence others: moving listeners from one point of view to another. This is very useful in marketing and sales.

John Abulafia teaches these skills by using role play. In the coaching session, the coachee will take turns to play both the role of their client, and their own role in a typical meeting.

Playing their own client is particularly valuable because it is a chance to experience the situation from their position and how their own behaviour impacts on the client.

THE FOLLOW UP SESSIONS.

After this, it is best for the client to have two or three weeks in order to apply these skills in their working day and life. Sometimes, they find they can use our work easily and don't require more help.

Some may want another session in which to consolidate the Skills session. This can take the form of rehearsing a presentations or role playing meetings with difficult clients or colleagues.

Others may want to go on and learn other skills such as improving their use of PowerPoint or their Facilitation skills.

Some clients want to have sessions where they can practice these new skills,. These can be done in a session with John Abulafia. Many clients choose to have a practice session that takes the form of a role play: this is useful for those interested in media interviews, or face to face meetings. In this case, Craft of Communication can provide a variety of highly skilled actors who can quickly absorb the details of the role they are required to play. We can also film these and clients can watch the playback to monitor their behaviour during interviews and also learn camera technique.

Craft of Communication can also provide Voice Coaching for those who have problems in that area.

Some clients have less definable needs. This is common. After all, they are changing so much: the way they breathe, stand, react, think about others. All this can affect people at quite a profound level. In addition, they may find these changes affect the way others react to them, and they need addition help in rising to this.

It is important that the timing of these follow up sessions suits the needs of the coachee. It may not be appropriate to have another three hour session. We can have a series of one hour or 90 minute meetings where we talk through the consequences of these changes, or focus on helping a coachee deal with situations as they come up in their diary. All these issues will be negotiated to suit their needs and circumstances.

The goal of Craft of Communication Coaching is to help managers and executives who wish and need to make a breakthrough in their careers. The coaching does not just teach techniques, but helps them to integrate these new skills into their existing skill base, career and life. With this, it is hoped they can find new ways to resolve old issues, and a fresh way to face the challenges to come.

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Craft of Communication

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