

ATD Workshop Series

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS training



**Includes All the Activities, Handouts, Tools, and Assessments  
You Need to Create and Deliver Powerful, Effective Training**

**MAUREEN OREY**

ATD Workshop Series

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS training

MAUREEN OREY

**atd**  
PRESS  
Alexandria, Virginia



© 2015 Association for Talent Development (ATD)  
All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

18 17 16 15      1 2 3 4 5

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, please go to [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com), or contact Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923 (telephone 978.750.8400; fax: 978.646.8600).

**ATD Press** is an internationally renowned source of insightful and practical information on workplace learning, performance, and professional development.

ATD Press  
1640 King Street Box 1443  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1443 USA

**Ordering information for print edition:** Books published by ATD Press can be purchased by visiting ATD's website at [store.astd.org](http://store.astd.org) or by calling 800.628.2783 or 703.683.8100.

Library of Congress Control Number: xxxxxx (print edition only)

ISBN-10: 1-56286-965-5  
ISBN-13: 978-1-56286-965-6  
e-ISBN: 978-1-60728-432-1

**ATD Press Editorial Staff:**

Director: Kristine Luecker  
Editorial Manager: Christian Green  
Community of Practice Manager, Learning & Development: Amanda Smith

Project Development and Editorial Production: Trainers Publishing House (TPH), Fairfax, VA  
Cover and Text Design: Ana Ilieva Foreman/Design  
Cover art: Shutterstock

# The ATD Workshop Series

Whether you are a professional trainer who needs to pull together a new training program next week, or someone who does a bit of training as a part of your job, you'll find the ATD Workshop Series is a time- and lifesaver.

Topics deliver key learning on today's most pressing business needs, including training for communication skills, leadership, coaching, new supervisors, customer service, new employee orientation, and more. The series is designed for busy training and HR professionals, consultants, and managers who need to deliver training quickly to optimize performance now.

Each ATD Workshop book provides all the content and trainer's tools you need to create and deliver compelling training guaranteed to

- **enhance** learner engagement
- **deepen** learner understanding
- **increase** learning application.

Each book in the series offers innovative and engaging programs designed by leading experts and grounded in design and delivery best practices and theory. It is like having an expert trainer helping you with each step in the workshop process. The straightforward, practical instructions help you prepare and deliver the workshops quickly and effectively. Flexible timing options allow you to choose from half-day, full-day, and two-day workshop formats, or create your own, using the tips and strategies presented for customizing the workshops to fit your unique business environment. Each ATD Workshop book also comes with guidance on leveraging learning technologies to maximize workshop design and delivery efficiency and access to all the training materials you will need, including activities, handouts, tools, assessments, and PowerPoint slides.

# Contents

**FOREWORD by Tony Bingham**

**PREFACE**

**INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS BOOK**

Why Do Communication Skills Matter?

What Do I Need to Know About Training?

How Much Time Will Preparation Take?

What Are the Important Features of the Book?

How Are the Agendas Laid Out?

How Do I Use This Book?

Key Points

What to Do Next

**SECTION I: THE WORKSHOPS**

**1 TWO-DAY COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP**

Workshop Objectives

Workshop Overview

Workshop Agenda

What to Do Next

**2 ONE-DAY COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP**

Workshop Objectives

Workshop Overview

Workshop Agenda

What to Do Next

### **3 HALF-DAY COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP**

Workshop Objectives

Workshop Overview

Workshop Agenda

What to Do Next

### **4 CUSTOMIZING THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP**

Customizing the Content and Activities

Customizing the Workshop Format

*Communication Skills Workshop Series*

*Small Bites—Lunch-and-Learn Seminars*

*Theme-Based Workshops*

Customizing Delivery with Technology

The Bare Minimum

What to Do Next

## **SECTION II: ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING**

### **5 IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING**

Why Needs Analysis?

*Strategic Needs Analysis*

*Structured Interviews*

*Focus Groups*

*Surveys*

Individual Learning Needs Analysis

The Bare Minimum

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **6 UNDERSTANDING THE FOUNDATIONS OF TRAINING DESIGN**

Basic Adult Learning Theory

More Theoretical Ideas Important to Learning

*Multiple Intelligences*

*Whole Brain Learning*

Theory into Practice

*Establishing a Framework*

*Identifying Behaviors*

*Practicing*

*Providing Feedback*

The Bare Minimum

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **7 LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO MAXIMIZE AND SUPPORT DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

Why Consider Learning Technologies?

Opportunities to Use Learning Technologies

*When Designing Training*

*Before Training*

*During Training*

*After Training*

Building a Learning Community

The Bare Minimum

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **8 DELIVERING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORKSHOP— BE A GREAT FACILITATOR**

The Learning Environment

Program Preparation Checklist

Participant Materials

*Handouts*

*PowerPoint Presentations*

*Workbooks and Journals*

*Videos*

*Toys, Noisemakers, and Other Props*

Facilitator Equipment and Materials

A Strong Start: Introduction, Icebreakers, and Openers

Feedback

*Role Plays*

*Participant Presentations*

*Ball Toss*

*Journaling*

Questioning Skills

Training Room and Participant Management

A Word about Dealing with Difficult Participants

An Unforgettable End

The Bare Minimum

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **9 EVALUATING WORKSHOP RESULTS**

Levels of Measurement

*Level 1: Measuring Participant Reactions*

*Level 2: Measuring the Extent to Which Participants Have Learned*

*Level 3: Measuring the Results of Training Back on the Job*

*Level 4: Measuring the Organizational Impact of Training*

*Return-on-Investment*

Reporting Results

The Bare Minimum

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **SECTION III—POST-WORKSHOP LEARNING**

### **10 THE FOLLOW-UP COACH**

Increasing Training Results Through Follow Up: What to Do After the Workshop

Follow-Up Action Planning

Follow-Up Coaching Sessions

Follow-Up Workshops

Creating an Open Culture for Effective Communication

Key Points

What to Do Next

## **SECTION IV—WORKSHOP SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND ONLINE SUPPORT**

### **11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

### **12 ASSESSMENTS**

### **13 HANDOUTS**

### **14 ONLINE ACCESS—CREATING YOUR CUSTOMIZED TRAINING PROGRAM**

Accessing Support Materials

Option One: Access to Ready-to-Use Resources

Option Two: Access to Customizable Resources

Option Three: Licensing Program Materials

Working with the Files

PDF Documents

PowerPoint Slides

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

## **ABOUT ATD**

# Preface

Everyone has something to say, but not everyone communicates well.

Whether you can speak or not, every person has a message that should be communicated and heard. Learning to communicate your message is much more challenging than it may seem. It takes self-reflection to discover your voice, and it takes courage and skill to speak it. It is a skill that does not always come automatically.

Communication impacts almost every part of the workplace. It can help us improve relationships and increase performance, or it can reduce trust, damage relationships, and ultimately lead to the failure of projects, teams, and organizations. Improving your communication skills takes the willingness to assess yourself honestly and the courage to take action and change existing behaviors that do not improve communication or build relationships.

Teaching others to have better communication skills is very rewarding and can even change lives! I once had a participant come to me a few months after attending a workshop on effective communication skills; she told me the reason she attended the workshop was that she was struggling to communicate effectively with her boss. Then she shared with me how she implemented the new skills learned in the workshop, and as a result the relationship with her boss had improved and led to positive progress in her career growth! How cool is that?

As a facilitator, you too can enable others to gain valuable skills and grow personally. If you are a seasoned trainer, you are already using many of these designs and formats. I encourage you to augment your workshop with the fresh insights and tools I have created for this ATD Workshop Series book. But you don't need to be an expert on training or communication to be able to help people strengthen their communication skills. The agendas and supplemental materials included here will provide all the tools you need to deliver programs that will improve communication skills for individuals, teams, and organizations... it is exciting work that ultimately can change lives!

Maureen Orey, CPLP  
San Diego, CA  
November 2014

# Introduction

# How to Use This Book

## What's in This Chapter

- Why communication skills matter
  - What you need to know about training
  - Estimates of time required
  - A broad overview of what the book includes
- 

## Why Do Communication Skills Matter?

In this world of constant change, effective communication is a crucial skill set for leaders and individual contributors. Communication is the key to both success and failure—making or breaking relationships, teams, or organizations. Poor communication reduces productivity, trust, and morale, whereas positive and respectful communication builds relationships and collaboration and increases productivity.

Verbal and nonverbal communication and attentive listening skills are valuable in the workplace. Good communication skills go beyond simply talking and conversations; communicating well in written reports and email is also essential. Workplace communication can be a challenging and difficult task. It takes a strong sense of self, emotional control, and personal confidence to allow yourself to become vulnerable with your colleagues. But without strong communication skills, developing successful working relationships is nearly impossible.

Communication is the vehicle for sharing information with colleagues; it is at the heart of team building, customer service, conflict management, and every other interaction in the workplace. The goal of all communication is to develop a common understanding of what was said and to ensure that the message that comes across is the same to all parties involved.

Understanding the benefits of effective communication helps companies focus on developing a workforce that is able to communicate with each other as well as with customers, vendors,

and business partners. If you are searching to build a positive, collaborative, and trusting work environment, good communication skills must be your foundation.

The first edition of this book in 2004 approached to the topic of communication skills somewhat differently, covering a wide variety of topics, with each topic presented at a very high level. This edition of the book offers a new approach. Fewer topics are covered overall, but each topic—listening skills, business writing, communicating your message, and verbal and non-verbal communication—is explored with a deeper dive into the content. In fact, each topic can stand alone as its own half-day workshop.

Providing your participants with a deeper, more nuanced understanding of communication will give them a solid foundation upon which to build strong skills and relationships in the workplace. The content, activities, and tools offered here are designed to help you to start this critical learning immediately.

## What Do I Need to Know About Training?

The ATD Workshop Series is designed to be adaptable for many levels of both training facilitation and topic expertise. Circle the answers below that most closely align with your levels of expertise and your organization’s commitment to learning. Each question circled in the column labeled 3 gets three points, and so on. Sum up your total score.

QUICK ASSESSMENT: HOW EXPERT DO I NEED TO BE?			
Question	3	2	1
What is your expertise as a facilitator?	Expert (> 5 years, always awesome evaluations)	Some experience (1–5 years, sometimes talk too much)	Beginner (< 1 year, no idea what to do)
How familiar are you with the topic?	Evolving expert (have taken courses, read books, created materials, <i>and</i> it is my passion)	Some experience (have taken courses, read books, created materials)	Beginner (had a course in school)
How committed is your company to investing in training or performance improvement?	Integral part of our corporate culture	Depends on the topic—this one is hot right now	Cheap and fast
TOTAL:			

**If you scored 1-3 (novice at both training and topic):** Your best bet is to stick as closely as possible to the materials as they are. Spend extra time with the content to learn as much as

possible about it. Also, closely read Chapter 8 on training delivery and consider practicing with a colleague before delivering the program.

**If you scored 4-6 (topic expert):** Use the outline and materials, but feel free to include materials you have developed and believe are relevant to the topic.

**If you scored 7-9 (training expert):** Feel free to adapt the agendas and materials as you see fit and use any materials that you have already developed, or simply incorporate training activities, tools, handouts, and so forth into your own agenda.

For more on facilitation skills, see Chapter 8 in this volume. Chapter 12 includes a comprehensive assessment instrument that will help you manage your professional development and increase the effectiveness of your communication skills training sessions (see Assessment 1: Facilitator Competencies).

## How Much Time Will Preparation Take?

Putting together and facilitating a training workshop, even when the agendas, activities, tools, and assessments are created for you, can be time consuming. For planning purposes, estimate about four days preparation time for a two-day course.

## What Are the Important Features of the Book?

Section I includes the various workshop designs (from a half day to two days) with agendas and thumbnails from PowerPoint slides as well as a chapter on customizing the workshop for your circumstances. The chapters included are

- Chapter 1. Two-Day Workshop (15 hours program time) + Agenda + PPT (thumbnails)
- Chapter 2. One-Day Workshop (7.5 hours program time) + Agenda + PPT (thumbnails)
- Chapter 3. Half-Day Workshop (3 to 4 hours program time) + Agenda + PPT (thumbnails)
- Chapter 4. Customizing the Communication Skills Workshop.

The workshop chapters include advice, instructions, workshop at-a-glance tables, as well as full program agendas.

Section II is standard from book to book in the ATD Workshop Series as a way to provide a consistent foundation of training principles. This section's chapters follow the ADDIE model—the classic instructional design model named after its steps (analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation). They are based on best practices and crafted with input from

experienced training practitioners. They are meant to help you get up to speed as quickly as possible. Each chapter includes several additional recurring features to help you understand the concepts and ideas presented. The Bare Minimum gives you the bare bones of what you need to know about the topic. Key Points summarize the most important points of each chapter. What to Do Next guides you to your next action steps. And, finally, the Additional Resources section at the end of each chapter gives you options for further reading to broaden your understanding of training design and delivery. Section II chapters include

- Chapter 5. Identifying Needs for Communication Skills Training
- Chapter 6. Understanding the Foundations of Training Design
- Chapter 7. Leveraging Technology to Maximize and Support Design and Delivery
- Chapter 8. Delivering Your Communication Skills Workshop—Be a Great Facilitator
- Chapter 9. Evaluating Workshop Results.

Section III covers information about post-workshop learning:

- Chapter 10. The Follow-Up Coach

Section IV includes all the supporting documents and online guidance:

- Chapter 11. Learning Activities
- Chapter 12. Assessments
- Chapter 13. Handouts
- Chapter 14. Online Tools and Downloads

The book includes everything you need to prepare for and deliver your communication skills workshop:

- **Agendas**, the heart of the series, are laid out in three columns for ease of delivery. The first column shows the timing, the second gives the PowerPoint slide number and image for quick reference, and the third gives instructions and facilitation notes. These are designed to be straightforward, simple agendas that you can take into the training room and use to stay on track. They include cues on the learning activities, notes about tools or handouts to include, and other important delivery tips.
- **Learning activities**, which are more detailed than the agendas, cover the objectives of the activity, the time and materials required, the steps involved, variations on the activity in some cases, and wrap-up or debriefing questions or comments.

- **Assessments, handouts, and tools** are the training materials you will provide to learners to support the training program. These can include scorecards for games, instructions, reference materials, samples, self-assessments, and so forth.
- **Presentation media** (PowerPoint slides) are deliberately designed to be simple so that you can customize them for your company and context. They are provided for your convenience. Chapter 7 discusses different forms of technology that you can incorporate into your program, including different types of presentation media.

All the program materials are available for download, customization, and duplication. See chapter 14 for instructions on how to access the materials.

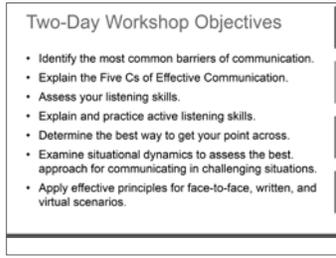
## How Are the Agendas Laid Out?

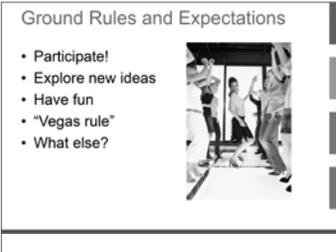
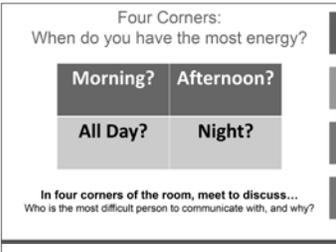
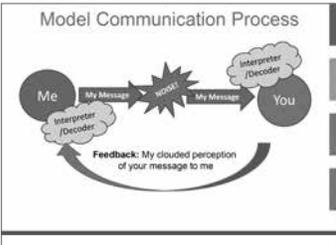
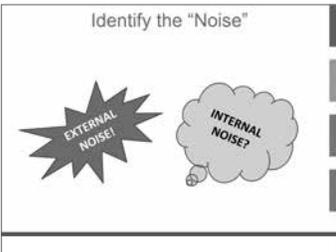
The following agenda is a sample from the two-day communication skills workshop.

### Two-Day Workshop Agenda

The focus of day one is face-to-face communication and listening skills.

#### Day One: (8:00am to 4:00pm)

TIMING	SLIDES	ACTIVITIES/NOTES/CONSIDERATIONS
8:00 a.m. (10 min)	Slide 1 	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> Arrive early to set up the room and make sure everything works properly. Adjust the room set-up as needed. Welcome participants as they arrive.
8:10 a.m. (15 min)	Slide 2 	<b>Learning Activity 1: Objective Decision</b> • <b>Handout 1a: Objective Decision</b> This activity provides an innovative way to facilitate the discussion about session objectives rather than simply reading them to the participants. Follow the instructions in the learning activity and handout.

TIMING	SLIDES	ACTIVITIES/NOTES/CONSIDERATIONS
8:25 a.m. (10 min)	Slide 3 	<b>Ground Rules and Expectations</b> Facilitate the discussion about ground rules and expectations for the course. Adjust times for starting, breaks, and lunches as needed to accommodate your environmental factors.
8:35 a.m. (15 min)	Slide 4 	<b>Learning Activity 2: Four Corners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handout 2: The Most Difficult Person in the World</li> </ul> Get participants thinking by using Handout 2 and then follow the instructions in the learning activity. Or you can facilitate this activity without the handout; four corners and a discussion question will get the conversation going.
8:50 a.m. (15 min)	Slide 5 	<b>Learning Content/Lecture</b> Communication Model Process Present the Communication Model. Explain the process of miscommunication and how “noise”— real and perceived—can have an impact on the communication process.
9:05 a.m. (15 min)	Slide 6 	<b>Learning Activity 3: Identify the Noise</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handout 3: Causes of Miscommunication</li> </ul> Instruct participants to work together to identify and discuss the sources of noise that create miscommunication. Facilitate discussion around the debriefing questions in the learning activity.

## How Do I Use This Book?

If you’ve ever read a “Choose Your Own Adventure” book, you will recognize that this book follows a similar principle. Think back to the self-assessment at the beginning of this introduction:

- If you chose *training expert*, you can get right to work preparing one of the workshops in Section I. Use Section II as a reference. Each of the chapters features a sidebar or other information written by the author who has much experience in the topic under consideration. This advice can help guide your preparation, delivery, and evaluation of training.
- If you chose *topic expert*, read Section II in depth and skim the topic content.
- If you chose *novice at training and the topic*, then spend some serious time familiarizing yourself with both Sections I and II.

Once you have a general sense of the material, assemble your workshop. Select the appropriate agenda and then modify the times and training activities as needed and desired. Assemble the materials and familiarize yourself with the topic, the activities, and presentation media.

## Key Points

- Oral and written communication skills are essential to individual and organizational success.
- Effective listening skills help build positive relationships.
- The workshops in this book are designed to be effective all levels of trainer expertise.
- Good training requires an investment of time.
- The book contains everything you need to create a workshop, including agendas, learning activities, presentation media, assessments, and handouts and tools.

## What to Do Next

- Review the agendas presented in Section I and select the best fit for your requirements, time constraints, and budget.
- Based on your level of expertise, skim or read in-depth the chapters in Section II.
- Consider what kind of follow-up learning activities you will want to include with the workshop by reviewing Section III.

## Additional Resources

Biech, E. (2008). *10 Steps to Successful Training*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

Biech, E., ed. (2014). *ASTD Handbook: The Definitive Reference for Training & Development*, 2nd edition. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

Emerson, T., and M. Stewart. (2011). *The Learning and Development Book*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

McCain, D.V., and D.D. Tobey. (2004). *Facilitation Basics*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

Piskurich, G. (2003). *Trainer Basics*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD Press.

# About the Author



**Maureen C. Orey** is an award-winning international speaker, expert facilitator, and executive coach with more than 25 years of experience in the fields of management, leadership, training, career development, and diversity. She has worked in many industries including technology, healthcare, construction, hospitality, and education. Her client list includes Boeing, Sony Corp, Scripps Health, SHARP Healthcare, San Diego State University, the Scaffold Industry Association, the Association for Talent Development (ATD), the City of San Diego, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the U.S. Navy, among others. As President of the Workplace Learning and Performance Group, Orey is dedicated to working with inspired individuals and organizations to help them improve their performance so they can achieve their desired results.

Orey is the best-selling author of *Communication Skills Training* (ASTD Press, 2004) and *Successful Staffing in a Diverse Workplace* (Richard Chang Associates). She is a Certified Professional in Learning and Performance (CPLP), holds a master's degree in education from the University of San Diego, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from San Diego State University. In addition to her work in the private sector, she currently serves as adjunct professor at University of California, San Diego and Brandman University. Orey recently embraced the role of student as she just completed her first year of doctoral studies in organizational leadership at Brandman University.

Among her many professional recognitions, Orey was honored as the 2008 Outstanding Instructor of the Year for San Diego State University's College of Extended Studies. Her company, The Workplace Learning & Performance Group, is proud to be the 2014 Winner of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Awards.

She is passionate about work-life balance, health, fitness, and embracing the differences that make us strong. She stays fit with regular circuit training, martial arts and body building. Originally from San Diego, she is a proud mother of three children, and has served as President of the Helix Charter High School PTSA. She resides in Spring Valley, California.

Contact Maureen at [Maureen@wlpgroup.com](mailto:Maureen@wlpgroup.com), 619.847.4748, or on the web at [www.wlpgroup.com](http://www.wlpgroup.com).

Buy This Book