

## Course Information

**Course Title:** MBA 777 – Communicating for Success: Speak, Engage, Lead

**Credit Hours:** 1.0

**Course Term:** Winteirm 2019

**Delivery Mode:** Online

## Instructor Information:

**Name:** Dr. Alex Birkholz

**Home Campus:** UW-Eau Claire

**Email:** [birkhoad9249@uwec.edu](mailto:birkhoad9249@uwec.edu)

Email availability: Emails sent before 5 p.m. Monday – Friday will usually receive a same-day response

Phone: 715.441.3148

## Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to enhance students' workplace communication skills. Students and their organizations will benefit as students apply practical strategies to oral and interpersonal communication contexts for nearly any audience. Using their current organizations (or organization of their choice) as a reference, students will engage in discussions regarding communication in the workplace and offer their own samples for critique from other students and from the instructor. Oral and interpersonal communication are the focus of the course, but many of the strategies are ones that are discussed in MBA 773 (the written communication course) well, making these two courses complementary but not necessarily sequential or dependent on completion of the other. The course also includes a brief review of the foundational theories that inform oral and interpersonal communication.

## Key Take-aways for Students Include the Following:

- An understanding of the perspectives on the role of oral and interpersonal communication in an organization and approaches to communication in the workplace
- Knowledge of the factors that affect communication: power, control, values, beliefs, priorities
- The ability to
  - Analyze an audience and tailor a message to that audience
  - Deliver clear, concise, complete, and coherent messages in an appropriate tone and style for the intended audience
  - Persuade and convince audiences and selling ideas in the workplace
  - Develop appropriate and effective PowerPoint presentations for use in large-group settings
  - Lead efficient and effective meetings.
  - Communicate in teams

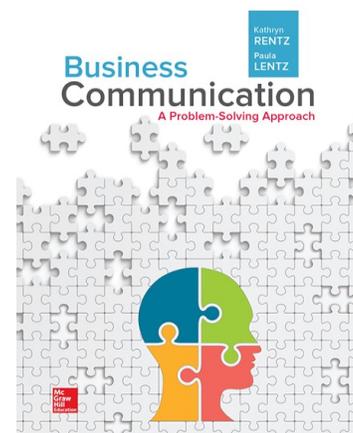
## Learning Objectives

- Understand how to learn the features of an organization's culture and to explain how these features affect communication.
- Explain how power, control, values, beliefs, and priorities impact persuasion
- Develop persuasive messages for large-group and interpersonal communication
- Give presentations that are persuasive, interesting, and impactful
- Develop PowerPoint presentations and visuals

- Deliver persuasive PowerPoint presentations in large-group settings
- Use and integrate handouts and other visuals during a presentation
- Manage audience interactions during a presentation
- Analyze how one's communication preferences and style impact communication
- Describe active listening strategies and how they can be used in interpersonal communication settings
- Use communication skills to effectively handle difficult conversations, deliver constructive criticism, and plan for feedback
- Recognize individual roles and communication styles in team and group settings
- Use communication skills to run efficient and effective meetings: organizing for accomplishment, engaging attendees, managing conversations and participation, using and responding to nonverbal communication

## Textbook, Materials, and Technology Requirements

- Rentz, Kathryn & Lentz, Paula (2017). *Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach*, 1st edition, New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-1259565878.
- Eisenberg Eric, M., Angela Trethewey Angela, LeGreco Marianne, and Goodall Jr., H. L. (2016). *Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint*, 8th edition, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, ISBN: 978-1-319-05234-8.
- Webcam and recording technology for presentations.



## Assignments and Activities

All assignments must be placed in the appropriate D2L Dropbox or discussion forum by 11:59 p.m. CST on the due date in the Course Schedule.

In addition, all assignments must be submitted in the file format specified in the assignment directions. Assignments in other file formats will receive a score of 0 if I cannot open them.

Any work turned in after the deadline receives a 10% deduction each day it is late for up to three days. For example, if you miss an 11:59 p.m. due date on September 17 but turn the assignment in before 11:59 p.m. on September 18, the assignment will receive a 10% deduction. If it is after 11:59 p.m. on September 18 and you still haven't turned in the late assignment but turn it in before 11:59 p.m. September 19, the assignment receives a 20% deduction, and so on. After three days, the assignment receives a score of 0.

If you have work or emergencies that prevent you from completing course work, please communicate with me so we can keep you on track in the course.

An absence will be considered excused or authorized according to the following institutional policies:

1. The student's home campus policy on excused absences will apply.
  - [UW-Oshkosh](#)
  - [UW-Parkside](#)
2. UW MBA Consortium students will follow the [UW-Eau Claire Authorized Absence Policy](#).

## Assignments

- PowerPoint Presentation slides
- Persuasive PowerPoint presentation and visuals

- Recorded final group meeting

## Activities

- Discussions
- Peer critiques

## Discussion Postings

Interactivity between you and your classmates and between you and me is essential to your success in this course. Throughout the course, we will participate in discussions that require an original response from you as well as a response from you to another student.

**Note:** Late discussions, regardless of how late they are, receive a score of 0.

Discussions should be spell checked and approximate standard English grammar. You may want to type your discussions in Word, spell check them, and then post them in the D2L discussion forum.

See the Discussion Rubric for more information on grading.

## Grading policy

Discussions and other Activities: 30%; Assignments: 70%

**A comprehensive list of all course activities is listed in the course calendar.**

Percent Range	UW MBA Consortium UW Parkside	UW Oshkosh
93–100	A	A
90–92	A-	A-
87–89	B+	B+
83–86	B	B
80–82	B-	B-
77–79	C+	C+
73–76	C	C
70–72	C-	F
67–69	D+	F
63–66	D	F
60–62	D-	F
0–59	F	F

## Academic Honesty

Unless I specify otherwise, all work that you turn in to me should be an individual effort. I do encourage you to seek your peers' opinions of your work or ask for specific feedback from your peers on individual assignments. There will also be assigned collaboration and peer editing. However, the sentence structure, wording, and content for your assignments and discussions must be your original work. Academically dishonest behaviors include (but may not be limited to) the following:

- Intentionally or unintentionally presenting someone else's ideas or words as your own, either as a direct quote or paraphrased or summarized material, without the proper citation. You can cite your sources in APA format. Numerous sources are available on the Internet for APA style, but one of my favorites is [Diana Hacker's, A Pocket Style Manual](#).
- Submitting work that is identical to or so similar to that of another's in its wording, sentence structure, and content that it cannot be considered original.
- Plagiarizing yourself by submitting work for evaluation in this course that was previously graded or otherwise evaluated in another course. You can cite your previous work. If you want to use your previous work, contact me first.
- Making up data or citations.
- Helping someone else engage in academically dishonest behavior.
- Violating copyright laws. In some cases, citing a source is not sufficient; you also have to obtain permission from the original source for the materials you use. If you submit materials from your workplace for this course, be sure you have permission to share these materials publicly. Likewise, if you use any materials from this course outside this course, you may need permission to use them (e.g., in your company's training manuals, publications, or style guides).
- Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" for the assignment and will follow the student academic disciplinary procedures as established by the UW System Board of Regents ([UWS Chapter 14](#)).

My assumption is that you will do your own work and that academic honesty will not be an issue. While I realize that the Internet makes cheating much easier, I have also discovered that it also makes cheating much easier to detect. If you are tempted to cheat, ask yourself why. If you feel the need to cheat because the work is too hard or you're overwhelmed by the online environment, contact me. I will work with you so that you can complete the course with your self-respect intact. If you feel the need to cheat because you got behind or procrastinated, preserve your self-respect by accepting the lost points or by dropping the course and taking it when you're in a better position to succeed.

## Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

In order to ensure that all of our students have equitable access to our online course materials, we strive to meet the guidelines set by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, which requires the public to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities when posting web-based materials. Desire2Learn (D2L), our learning management system, has Gold-Level Nonvisual Accessibility Web Certification by the National Federation of the Blind. If you need accommodations, please contact Online Course Support at 888.832.7090 or 715.836.6019 or email [BizHelp@uwec.edu](mailto:BizHelp@uwec.edu) and we will work with you to find a reasonable accommodation.

## Netiquette: Communicating with Your Classmates and Me

Because this is an online course, I ask that you communicate with me either via email or the Q&A discussion forum in D2L. I enjoy the opportunity to communicate with you via electronically because doing so gives me the chance to get to know you and gives you the opportunity to practice your writing skills in an informal yet professional setting.

To ensure a timely and accurate response to your message, remember to keep your communication positive, constructive, and relevant to the course. Please also remember to be professional: use standard capitalization, punctuation, and appropriate language; spell check your messages before sending them; and be sure to include all the information I will need to act on your message.

At the end of your message, also include your full name and home campus. Keep in mind, too, that we're communicating asynchronously; therefore, be sure you allow enough time for a response.

## Finding Course Announcements

Course information and announcements will be posted in D2L or sent via email. Please check D2L and your campus e-mail daily for any news or announcements regarding this class.

# MBA 777: Communicating for Success: Speak, Engage, Lead

## Course Schedule - Winter 2019

*All assignments due at **11:59 p.m. CDT** unless otherwise noted.*

**Discussion Leader Response and summary:** At some point in the course, you will be a discussion leader. Check the [Discussion Leader Guidelines](#) to know when you are leading the discussion and be sure to mark your calendar.

### Week 1: Course Introduction, Persuasion, and PowerPoint Presentations

Assignments	Due Date
Read through the documents located in the Course Info module in Content	Read by: <b>Tuesday, January 8</b>
<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eisenberg, Goodall, Jr., and Trethewey, Ch. 1: "Changes in the Meaning of Work: The New Social Contract," pp. 21-24; Chapter 2: "Defining Organizational Communication," pp. 31 – 44; Ch. 6: "Power and Ideology" and "Discourse and Discipline," pp. 166–179</li> <li>• Read the MBA 777 Course Case: The Power of Persuasion: Mastering Communication for Decision-Making in Your Organization in the Course Info module.</li> <li>• Rentz and Lentz, Ch. 10 and 13</li> <li>• <b>Commentaries:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <a href="#">How Good Is Your Filter?</a></li> <li>◦ <a href="#">Power: Why You Want It and How You Get It</a></li> <li>◦ <a href="#">The Power of Persuasion</a></li> <li>◦ <a href="#">PowerPoint Corrupts Absolutely</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Read by: <b>Wednesday, January 9</b>
<b>Discussion:</b> Video Introduction to your classmates in the Introductions Discussion	Initial Post due by: <b>Wednesday, January 9</b>
<b>Discussion:</b> <a href="#">How Good Is Your Filter? / Power</a> <b>Discussion Leader Response and summary:</b> At some point in the course, you will be a discussion leader. Check the <a href="#">Discussion Leader Guidelines</a> to know when you are leading the discussion and be sure to mark your calendar.	Initial post and responses: <b>Wednesday, January 9</b> Discussion Leader Responses and Summary Due: <b>Thursday, January 10</b>
<b>Case Study</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Logistics:</b> Read the Case Study Information (found in the Course Info module) and create a post in the Case Study Logistics forum stating the following:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your role in the case study - this will be your role for the duration of the course.</li> <li>2. How you will assist in the final meeting preparations.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>Assignment:</b> Create and post a draft of your <a href="#">Assignment: Preparing PowerPoint Slide Presentations</a> presentation to <a href="#">Case Study: PowerPoint Presentation Slides</a></li> </ol>	Post to Logistics forum: <b>Wednesday, January 9</b> Post PowerPoint Draft to Discussion: <b>Friday, January 11</b> Peer Critique Due: <b>Sunday, January 13</b> Submit Final PowerPoint to the Dropbox by: <b>Monday, January 14</b>

3. **Discussion:** Peer critique a group member's PowerPoint in the [Case Study: PowerPoint Presentation Slides](#) forum
4. Review feedback given by your peers to revise your PowerPoint presentation
5. **Dropbox:** Final PowerPoint slide presentation to the Final PowerPoint Presentation dropbox for grading

## Week 2: Delivering Presentations, Analyzing Your Communication Style and Preferences

Assignments	Due Date
<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rentz and Lentz, Chapter 13: Pay special attention to the information on nonverbal communication, professional presence, and delivery; Chapter 14: "Putting Interpersonal Communication Skills to Work in Conversations and Meetings," p. 534–540</li> <li>• Eisenberg, Ch. 8: "Teams and Networks," p. 233-239, Communicative Dimensions of Teamwork; p. 241-251</li> <li>• <b>Commentaries:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <a href="#">It's not what you say; it's how you say it</a></li> <li>◦ <a href="#">Introverts &amp; Extraverts: The Secret to a Happy and Healthy Workplace</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Read by: <b>Tuesday, January 15</b></p>
<p><b>Activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the <a href="#">Communication Styles Survey</a>. (<b>NOTE:</b> If you completed this survey in MBA 773, you may use those results; you don't need to do the inventory again. You will, however, need the results to complete the "Sometimes the Conversations Are Hard" discussion due tomorrow.)</li> <li>• Take a personality test if you have not yet taken the Myers-Briggs or similar test. Two options (or find your own): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <a href="#">Jung Typology Test</a></li> <li>◦ <a href="#">Truity TypeFinder Test</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Complete by: <b>Wednesday, January 16</b></p>
<p><b>Discussion:</b> <a href="#">Sometimes the Conversations Are Hard</a></p> <p><b>Discussion Leader Response and summary:</b> At some point in the course, you will be a discussion leader. Check the <a href="#">Discussion Leader Guidelines</a> to know when you are leading the discussion and be sure to mark your calendar.</p>	<p>Initial post and responses: <b>Thursday, January 17</b></p> <p>Discussion Leader Responses and Summary Due: <b>Friday, January 18</b></p>
<p><b>Case Study</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the feedback given by the instructor to edit and revise your PowerPoint presentation before recording your presentation</li> <li>2. <b>Assignment:</b> Draft of your <a href="#">Case Study: PowerPoint Presentation</a></li> </ol>	<p>Post PowerPoint Draft to Discussion: <b>Friday, January 18</b></p> <p>Peer Critique Due: <b>Sunday, January 20</b></p>

<p><a href="#">Recording</a> in the <a href="#">Case Study: PowerPoint Presentation Recording</a> forum</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discussion:</b> Peer critique a group member's PowerPoint in the <a href="#">Case Study: PowerPoint Presentation Recording</a> forum</li> <li>Review feedback given by your peers to revise your recorded presentation</li> <li><b>Dropbox:</b> Final recorded presentation to the <a href="#">Final Recorded Presentation</a> dropbox for grading</li> </ol>	<p>Submit Final Recorded Presentation (PowerPoint File/Video) to the Dropbox by: <b>Tuesday, January 22</b></p>
---	---

## Week 3: Interpersonal Communication, Running Effective Meetings

Assignments	Due Date
<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eisenberg, Ch. 9: Communicating Leadership, p.289-298. (Note: If you need a review of basic leadership principles, be sure to read the first part of the chapter.)</li> <li>Rentz and Lentz, p. 541–551</li> <li><b>Commentaries:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">If I ran the world...or at least a meeting...</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Read by: <b>Tuesday, January 22</b></p>
<p><b>Activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Listening Style Inventory</a>. (<b>NOTE:</b> If you completed this survey in MBA 773, you may use those results; you don't need to do the inventory again.)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b> <a href="#">If I ran the world, or at least a meeting</a></p> <p><b>Discussion Leader Response and summary:</b> At some point in the course, you will be a discussion leader. Check the <a href="#">Discussion Leader Guidelines</a> to know when you are leading the discussion and be sure to mark your calendar.</p>	<p>Initial post and responses: <b>Wednesday, January 23</b></p> <p>Discussion Leader Responses and Summary Due: <b>Thursday, January 24</b></p>
<p><b>Case Study</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Meet with your group ONE time during week 3. You can meet anytime between Saturday, January 19, and Friday, January 25. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are open to give your group more options for choosing a time to meet during week 3.</li> <li><b>Dropbox:</b> Reflect on your final group meeting, your decision, and your final reflection on your decision and submit to the <a href="#">Final Group Meeting Reflection</a> dropbox</li> </ol>	<p>Group Meeting: <b>Saturday, January 19 - Friday, January 25.</b></p> <p>Reflection: <b>Saturday, January 26</b></p>

## Instructor: Alex Birkholz

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the new semester and MBA 777: Communicating for Success – Speak, Engage, Lead. I am Dr. Alex Birkholz and excited to be working with you over the next three weeks. Communication is a critical skill in business and we will be applying some practical strategies adaptable to nearly any situation. As we begin, I am anxious to meet you and share some information about me.



I earned an undergraduate degree in Business from UW-Eau Claire. During my junior year, I was recruited into management at a major retailer. I spent twelve years with the company experiencing a variety of job responsibilities. All of the positions required effective communication skills. I came to find that my most rewarding experiences at work involved documenting and delivering training. My employer encouraged me to pursue a graduate degree and this led to my first teaching assignment. My doctoral work was completed at the University of Minnesota. Along with teaching on campus and online, I manage a public access television station. Working with producers to create original content is very rewarding. Budgets are tight so I hosted one of our talk shows for a few years. It's fun when people approach you and just start talking because they know you from television. Communication has been successful when viewers feel that comfortable and want to engage further.

My wife and I reside on the Wisconsin side of the Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota, metropolitan area. We enjoy our proximity to the airport as we both love to travel. While most trips are domestic, we occasionally lead student groups on business tours of European countries. Our last visit was to Ireland.

Back at home, I enjoy cooking, performing music, and working on home improvement projects. At the moment, a number of landscaping projects are on the priority list. Perennials are fun to grow but require continual splitting. Summer and fall visitors to our house often leave with a potted plant. We are offering ornamental grass at the moment.

In addition to business communications, I enjoy teaching courses in economics, marketing, and management. The success of our course will be partially based on what we learn from each other. I look forward to getting to know you.