



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Course Outline

Difficult Conversations in the Workplace

Difficult conversations in the workplace are like the flu: They are unwanted, they cause discomfort, and they are unavoidable. In this course, you will prepare for difficult communication with your boss, coworkers and customers by understanding the root of communication conflicts; recognizing your own emotional triggers and habitual communication patterns; identifying high conflict words; modifying existing communication habits; and practicing neutral body positioning, breathing techniques and vocal tips.

Who Should Take This Course?

This course is designed for anyone who encounters difficult conversations with staff, coworkers, clients, customers or the public. This may include those in customer service (internal and external), team leaders, managers, and those on the path to leadership positions.

Course Objectives

- Identify the root of most communication conflicts
- Analyze habitual verbal and nonverbal communication patterns, including facial expressions, communications in certain situations, and communications with particular people
- Evaluate language and how word choice can increase the velocity of communications
- Utilize strategic methods of approaching conversations and diffusing high conflict communications

Course Info

- Length: 6 hours
- Format: Classroom instruction, demonstration and exercises
- Prerequisite: None

Course Content

Identify the root of most communication conflicts

- Understand how core values, life experiences, past communications and perceptions influence our communications
- Assess communication triggers, why they occur, and how to manage them
- Identify multi-generational differences and the role they play in communication conflict

Analyze habitual verbal and nonverbal communication patterns

- Learn the science behind habits, why we have them, and why they are difficult to change
- Recognize the habitual patterns to facial expressions, communications in certain situations, and communications with particular people
- Understand how to modify existing habits to aid in managing difficult conversations or existing negative communication relationships

Evaluate language and how word choice can increase the velocity of communications

- Review communications rating high on the research-based hostility scale of communication
- Identify what words, intonation and communication patterns increase hostility
- Apply specific strategies for approaching high-velocity communications

Utilize strategic methods of approaching conversations and diffusing high conflict communications

- Understand how neutral body positioning and table logistics influence communications
- Apply breathing techniques, speech training, and vocal tips to self-manage responses to hostile communications
- Learn how to use listening for disclosure, a specific type of active listening to help achieve constructive end outcomes

Assessment /Evaluation

This course is not assigned a letter or numerical grade. However, in some cases, skill assessments may be administered during the course to gauge progress and comprehension.

Course Completion/Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Letter

If your company requires proof of course completion, or if you would like to have proof for your own records, you may request a Course Completion/Continuing Education Unit (CEU) letter **after the final session of your course**. You must attend* 80 percent of the course (or 100 percent of a single-day course) to qualify for the letter. You can [request a Course Completion/CEU letter online](#).

Certificates of Completion for Certificate Programs

To receive a Certificate of Completion for the Workplace Excellence Certificate, you must take all seven required courses and attend* 80 percent of the entire certificate (calculated by total number of sessions). If you complete a certificate program by taking courses individually (not through a series), you can [request a Certificate of Completion online](#).

*Attendance for CEU letters and certificate programs is verified via the sign-in sheets provided at each class session. It is your responsibility to sign-in.

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The accommodations authorized on your forms should be discussed with your instructor. All discussions will remain confidential. Accommodations are not provided retroactively, so it is essential to discuss your needs at the beginning of the quarter. Additionally, only accommodations approved by Disability Support Services will be provided. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Green River College is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Learn more at www.greenriver.edu/accessibility.