



Tone It Down: A Course in Communicating Diplomatically

Why This Course Is Essential:

A lot has changed over the last few decades regarding communication and expectations. More businesses are operating globally and must adopt culturally competent practices in their communication. Some organizations have up to 4 generations of employees working together, which requires a different appreciation for formal and informal communication. With increasing political and social polarization, learning to communicate diplomatically helps keep conversations civil and polite. Finally, the subtleties of communicating in English are excluded from English as a Second Language programs, which often leads to confusion, misunderstanding and false perceptions of the speaker. This course can help advance communication and build skills for trainees in any or all of these scenarios.

Course Goals:

- Understand the benefits derived from adopting a respectful and tactful communication style.
- Be equipped with specific words and tips for speaking and writing diplomatically.
- Have a formula for delivering bad news clearly and sensitively.
- Know when to use formal and informal communication.

Who Should Attend:

- Those who need tools and suggestions for delivering news sensitively.
- Those singled out as too direct, offensive, or impolite.
- Workers who want to sound more professional.
- Those who have never taken a business communications course.
- Those interested in reducing generational communication barriers.
- English as a Second Language speakers who wish to learn more about nuanced language.

Method:

- Role-plays
- Videos and discussion
- Large group and small group exercises
- Individual work

Course Agenda:

INTRODUCTION	Why is this topic important?	Exercise
TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING DIPLOMATICALLY	What do we mean by diplomatic language?	Group Discussion
	Adjectives that are associated with people who are impolite or are respectful.	
	Examples of undiplomatic language and discussion of impacts.	
	Words and phrases that soften the tone of your message.	
	Exercise: Rewriting sentences in a more diplomatic tone.	Breakout group in pairs
	What are modal verbs, and how can we use them to sound more professional?	
	Exercise: Discuss the differences between the two dialogues.	Breakout groups
	Review: A set of questions to clarify points before moving on to the next phase	Break out groups in pairs or larger group discussions.
TIPS FOR DELIVERING BAD NEWS	What kinds of bad news are you expected to deliver in your job?	Large group discussion
	Bad News Video (7 mins)	Watch Video & Discussion Group Questions
	7 Goals for Delivering Bad News	
	The Formula for Delivering Bad News	
	Two Scenarios	Role-Playing – Breakout group (Pairs)
	Analysis of a Customer Service Letter	Breakout Groups with targeted questions
CHOOSING THE RIGHT TONE	What is the difference between a “register” and a “tone”?	

	What are the characteristics of “casual,” “neutral,” and “formal” communication styles? When do you use them?	
	Match the informal expression with the formal equivalent.	Individual exercise
	The Do’s of Formal Writing	
	What to Avoid in Formal Writing	
	Make it Formal	Large group exercise
	Rewrite the email, making it more casual	Breakout in pairs
	Examples of the correct and incorrect use of “register”.	Read out in groups and analyze
WRAPPING IT UP	Summary of main points	

For more information, contact:

Evelina Silveira, President

[Diversity at Work Communications Training](#)

evelina@diversityatworkcommunications.com

519-659-4777