## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Strong interpersonal communication skills are essential for productive organizational culture, people-leadership, and team performance. Professionals working in all sectors rely on their interpersonal abilities to effectively communicate to direct reports, superiors, colleagues, clients, and other stakeholders.

In **Interpersonal Business Communication,** you will engage in rich self-exploration to deepen your understanding of your own interpersonal communication patterns, analyze their impact, and apply course skills that increase your capacity to foster collaboration with others. You will develop and build skills in listening and empathy, perception-checking, reducing defensiveness, addressing conflict, leveraging non-verbal communication and giving and receiving feedback.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you will be able to do the following:

- Develop a deepened sense of self-awareness and how it contributes to effective interpersonal communication.
- Apply interpersonal communication strategies to build collaborative and positive relationships.
- Model non-verbal communication techniques that reflect confidence, assertiveness and empowerment within the workplace.
- Apply conflict resolution techniques, set-boundaries and approach difficult workplace situations with confidence.
- Apply effective communication micro-skills and self-reflection to continuously inspire growth and leadership in self and others.

## LEARNING METHODS

Classes may consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, workshops, case studies, examinations, projects, papers, assignments and/or group presentations. Prepare to spend six to ten hours per week on coursework. You can expect reading and other assignments on a weekly basis.

## SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

| Modules | Topics & Learning Objectives | Pre-Class Readings and Activities | In-Class Readings and Activities |
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| 1 | Course Introduction (book introduction)<br>- **Identify** the characteristics of interpersonal mush<br>- **Describe** the mechanisms that drive the psychological foundations of interpersonal mush<br>- **Examine** best practice approaches for reflective journaling | Read: *Clear Leadership*. Introduction.<br>Read: Understanding the Johari Window model<br>Your Complete Guide to Getting Started with Journaling<br>Journaling for Mindfulness: 44 Prompts, Examples & Exercises | Review guidance on Journalling assigned from instructor<br><br>Watch video on Johari window |

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| | • **Identify** the components of norms of behaviour in a team setting<br><br>• **Apply** engagement techniques to guide norms of behaviour in a team setting<br><br>• **Discuss** the components of a Prioritized Action Plan for improving interpersonal business communication | Creating Team Agreements for Your Remote Team | Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises<br><br>Introduce Assignment 1 |
| 2 | Interpersonal Mush & The Organizational Learning Conversation<br><br>• **Identify** personal experiences that relate to interpersonal mush<br><br>• **Recognize** the critical elements of interpersonal mush at a personal, team and organizational level<br><br>• **Assess** the impact of interpersonal mush on collaboration in the workplace<br><br>• **Review** some of the key skills that you can apply in Learning Conversations<br><br>• **Apply** engagement techniques to guide norms of behaviour in a team setting<br><br>• **Practice** Learning Conversations in your groups with an observer to gain experience in applying these skills | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapters 1 & 2<br><br>Watch: Brené Brown on Empathy | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Watch video lectures<br><br>Watch Brene Brown: Empathy<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 3 | Understanding the Foundations of Clear Leadership - Self-Differentiation<br><br>• **Recognize** instances of fusion and disconnection in everyday situations you observe<br><br>• **Identify** the signs that you may be in fusion or disconnection | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 3<br><br>Read: The Ladder of Inference: Why we jump to conclusions | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor |

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| | • **Assess** your current level of psychological safety in the workplace<br>• **Relate** the Ladder of Inference to your own filters and perceptions that you have formed over time | [Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#)<br><br>[Using the Ladder of Inference to Make Better Decisions](#) | Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 4 | The Four Elements of Experience: The Experience Cube<br>• **Categorize** characteristics using the Johari window to expand the Open Window.<br>• **Articulate** how experience is formed through a combination of internal frameworks and external stimuli.<br>• **Distinguish** between the four elements of the Experience Cube<br>• **Practice** accessing the four elements of the Experience Cube to broaden conscious experience | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 4<br><br>Exercise: [Walking the Experience Cube](#)<br><br>Read: [87 Human Emotions and Experiences](#) | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Watch Johari Window adjectives video<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises<br><br>**Submit Assignment1**<br><br>Introduce Assignment 2 |
| 5 | The Aware Self: Knowing Your Experience From Moment to Moment<br>• **Describe** the significant role that anxiety plays in organizational behaviour<br>• **Practice** using clear language to avoid confusion about internal vs. external elements of experience<br>• **Employ** language focused on here and now to increase the clarity of Learning Conversations | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 5<br><br>Exercise: [Working Past Anxiety](#)<br><br>[Building Memory Maps](#) | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor |

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| | • **Experiment** with building three different kinds of Mental Maps to guide Learning Conversations | | Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 6 | The Descriptive Self: Reducing the Mush by Making Me Understandable to You<br>• **Recognize** appropriate level of transparency in both personal and professional settings when engaging in Learning Conversations<br>• **Practice** providing concise and relevant context prior to engaging in Learning Conversations<br>• **Develop** the skill of maintaining conversational clarity by considering personal impact before responding.<br>• **Apply** empathy, active listening, and open-mindedness to engage in conversations with respect and without judgment. | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 6<br><br>Exercise: <u>Describing Experience, Not Judgments</u> | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 7 | The Curious Self: Uncovering Other People's Experience<br>• **Identify** personal signs of defensiveness in Learning Conversations to maintain a self-differentiated state.<br>• **Practice** empathetic listening in Learning Conversations.<br>• **Translate** issues with others into personal experiences for collaborative adjustments and clear communication to avoid interpersonal mush<br>• **Distinguish** between three different levels of effective listening in learning conversations | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 7<br><br>Exercise: <u>Confront for Insight</u><br><br><u>Connecting with your Signs of Defensiveness</u> | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 8 | The Appreciative Self: Creating Spirals of Positive Partnership | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 8 | Read assigned |

| | | Exercise:Three Step Process<br>Seeking Positive Intent | pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises<br><br>**Submit Assignment2**<br><br>Introduce Assignment 3 |
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| | • **Cultivate** an appreciative mindset by adjusting mental maps to emphasize positivity and reduce interpersonal mush<br>• **Apply** interpretive skills to transform a relationship characterized by a deficit mindset into one grounded in an appreciative mindset.<br>• **Engage** in learning conversations to cultivate the Appreciative Self | | |
| 9 | The Learning Conversation in Depth<br>• **Compare** the benefits of Learning Conversations and Performance Management in organizations.<br>• **Illustrate** effective strategies for conducting impactful learning conversations.<br>• **Apply** strategies for overcoming barriers in learning conversations. | Read: *Clear Leadership* Chapter 9<br><br>Exercise:Overcoming Barriers | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises |
| 10 | Conclusion: Learning to Sustain Collaborative Organizations (Conclusion)<br>• **Compare** command-and-control with collaborative paradigms in different business environments.<br>• **Identify** Clear Leadership practices for fostering a shift to a collaborative culture in the workplace.<br>• **Apply** the four Selves of Clear Leadership for effective | Read *Clear Leadership* Chapter 10<br><br>Exercise:Paradigm Shifts<br>Gaps and Fillers | Read assigned pages from instructor<br><br>Attend live session with the instructor<br><br>Complete assigned practices and exercises |

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| | collaboration and self-awareness in the workplace. | | |
| 11 | Course Closure: Looking Forward, Your Reflection Journey, Next Steps<br>• **Relate** how the concepts from Humble inquiry support the collaborative elements of Clear Leadership by clarifying the intent of humility in our interactions<br>• **Critique** how the course was deployed to provide insights into how to evolve the course in future sessions<br>• **Devise** an understanding of how you can implement Clear Leadership skills in the workplace after the conclusion of the course. | Read: *Humble inquiry (1st ed.)*.Chapters 1 & 2<br><br>Exercise: <u>Humble Inquiry Conversations A Learning Conversation about MGMT110</u> | Reflect on course content<br><br>**Submit Assignment3** |

## LEARNING MATERIALS

Bushe, G. *Clear Leadership: Sustaining Real Collaboration and Partnership*.  2nd Edition (2010). ISBN 9780891063827.

## TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

To successfully pass this course, you must:

- Complete all required class assignments and meeting the expectations outlined by the instructor for each assignment
- Attend all class sessions and participate fully

Unless you have made a prior arrangement with your instructor, **Assignments** submitted after the posted due date and time will be considered late and may not receive full marks. After seven days (including weekends), the assignment may not be graded.

**Missed classes** cannot be made up without a prior written arrangement.

- Assignments are submitted as an e-copy on the due date to the instructor in Canvas
- Instructor feedback will be given throughout the course on the various assignments, activities and discussions in class
- Feedback during live sessions will be provided to widen the scope of understanding and explore related course concepts.
- Online activities to supplement student learning include:
  - o Self-study
  - o Group exercises
  - o Team discussions
  - o Case studies

- Reflective journaling

You will be evaluated on the following:

| Activity | Due | Weight |
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| Assignment 1 – Individual assignment: Past Interpersonal Mush Experience and Prioritized Action Plan | Module 4 | 20% |
| Assignment 2 – Group assignment: Identifying and Addressing Interpersonal Mush in the Workplace | Module 8 | 30% |
| Assignment 3- Individual assignment: Metacognitive Review of Application of Course Learnings | Module 11 | 25% |
| Engaged discussions | Modules 1,2,3,5,6,7,9, 10 | 25% |
| Total Marks | | 100% |