



The **Development** Company

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## **Sample Outline**

Key skills development  
for PA and Executive support staff

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## Introduction

This is a live proposal which was produced for a client during 2008. The client required an external training provider to help develop and deliver a range of training courses for approximately 80 PA and Executive support staff. A new 'career stream' had been established to support this range of staff with the aim of providing a professional dedicated training package that supported the day to day work as well as the existing skills framework.

## The Development Need

The client had conducted an initial training needs analysis and feedback resulted in a need for training in the following areas:

- minute taking
- time management
- assertiveness
- maximising your potential
- communication – both verbal and written
- personality traits
- team work/working in partnerships

## The Proposal

Kay Buckby from The Development Company Limited attended a meeting at the client in January 2008 and delivered a 60 minute Training Acorn on minute taking skills. The Acorn was well received and the visit provided ample information to write this proposal.

## The Programme

Below is the final programme

## Programme Summary

- ✓ **Minute Taking**
- ✓ **Time Management**
- ✓ **Assertiveness Skills**
- ✓ **Maximising your Potential**
- ✓ **Communication Skills - Verbal**
- ✓ **Professional Written Communication Skills**
- ✓ **Using Transactional Analysis to understand your Personality**
- ✓ **Team working in Partnership**

## Module 1 - Minute Taking

The success of a meeting rests, not just with the discussion and decisions taken, but also with accurate recording of what has taken place and what action is required. This module will give delegates a good understanding of the purpose of meetings. It will also enable delegates to take concise minutes that will be easy to read back and form an accurate record of a meeting.

*By the end of the module participants will be able to:*

- Identify the responsibilities of the minute taker
- Sort out facts
- Be selective in recording information
- Have the confidence to interject for clarity
- Lay out information in a style suited to them

## Module 2 - Time Management

Effective time management is arguably the best kept secret of business success. It greatly increases your work capacity and is a clear sign to others that you are an achiever. Apply what you learn in this one day module and you join a select group of business people who are in control, appear to have an high capacity for work and thrive in a pressured environment.

This is a highly participative workshop, using a psychometric test to highlight how the attendees use their time and an identification of each person's individual time wasting behaviour and how it leads to stress at work/home.

*By the end of the module participants will be able to:*

- Identify the barriers that get in the way of their work
- Use a practical model for planning and prioritising their workload (including email)
- Identify behaviours in themselves and others that cause time to be lost/encroached upon
- Identify ways to maximise their time to reduce stress and improve productivity
- Set objectives as a self-management and self-motivating tool
- Be more productive by at least 5% as a result of the course

## Module 3 - Assertiveness Skills (Handling Difficult People)

At some time or other most of us give in to people in authority or to those who are dominant or difficult. It stops us achieving our own goals and leaves us feeling inadequate, stressed and angry. This module identifies the behaviour patterns that lead to these situations. You will practise a new set of behaviour patterns so that you won't feel out of control in interpersonal situations.

*By the end of the module delegates will be able to:*

- Identify behaviours in themselves and others that lead to non-assertive behaviour
- Use a variety of assertiveness skills to deal with people
- Manage both aggressive and submissive behaviour
- Project their own authority in an assertive way
- Gain confidence in group situations
- Learn how to influence difficult people to ensure positive gains for all

## Module 4 - Maximising your Potential

This module provides an opportunity to assess your own skills profile in an active environment, rather than just speculatively thinking and talking about your skills. The focus is on learning from experience in a supportive environment, where it is possible to learn from your own and others' successes and mistakes.

Skill development is essentially an active process. It is usually not sufficient to attend a lecture on teamwork if one is interested in becoming more productive when working in a team, for example. The concepts and theories are put to the test and refined in practical action, by having individuals undertake tasks, which variously require creative thinking, close teamwork, careful planning, organisation and teamwork - as well as a spirit of fun. The implications for ongoing skills development in your everyday environment is the main concern of the course and time is set aside to consider and plan this beyond the course. The process starts with your individual skill development objectives, enlarging its concern to getting the best from working in groups, teams and organisations. Group events are often helpful in illuminating individual issues also, for example revealing hidden aspects of one's usual approaches to tasks and projects.

*By the end of the module delegates will be able to:*

- Use their work needs, motivations and values to create a strategy for career planning
- Use the GROW model to self coach to clarify goals and options
- Put a timeline in place for goals
- Apply a model of feedback for continuing professional development purposes

## Module 5 - Communication Skills - Verbal

This is an introduction to the dynamics of face-to-face communication skills - looking at what affects the participants and how they might take more charge of situations.

It gives an overview of how communication works at its best, identifying where it can go wrong. We 'unpick' all the elements that go into effective communication and explain to people how they can be more in charge of the communication dynamic.

The day will be based around this key aim, with delegates being given the opportunity to practice and experience each section.

***By the end of the module delegates will be able to:***

- Understand how communication works
- Gain active listening and responding skills
- Use effective questioning techniques
- See things from other points of view
- Manage your assumption more effectively
- Understand your own strengths
- Understand how others may see you
- Apply body language principles to all communication
- Have increased confidence in verbal communications

## Module 6 - Professional Written Communication Skills

Organisations and individuals establish their credibility with professional and well written communication. This professional written communication skills training module provides delegates with immediate and practical guidance on how to communicate effectively and professionally through written communication. In areas ranging from planning and grammar, tone, style and final proof-reading, delegates will quickly develop their professional written communication skills and confidence in order to improve e-mails, letters, memos and reports.

***By the end of the module delegates will be able to:***

- Plan, prepare and write with greater confidence.
- Construct letters, and e-mails that get results
- Produce written communications that relay your message to the recipient in a positive, professional and persuasive manner.
- Save time and handle correspondence with less instruction.
- Adapt your writing style to suit the nature of the correspondence whilst achieving clarity and brevity.
- Write accurately and professionally, avoiding unnecessary jargon or clichés.
- Avoid common errors and use sentences, paragraphs and punctuation correctly and effectively.
- Analyse and edit your work quickly and constructively and adopt effective proof-reading techniques.

## Module 7 - Using Transactional Analysis to understand your personality

Transactional Analysis is a theory in psychology developed by Dr Eric Berne. It is a psycho-social theory using transactions to analyse relationships and challenging people situations individuals may find themselves in. It is used to enable people to change their transacting style and adapt their approaches with colleagues, staffs and managers. The course is highly interactive.

This day is useful to: anyone who manages staff, works with colleagues, attends meetings, handles challenging phone calls and works with people! Attendees find it valuable in enhancing both professional and personal relationships.

*By the end of this day attendees will be able to:*

- Understand your preferred style of communication
- Adapt your style, using voice tone, words and body language to be appropriate to the situation or receiver
- Analyse your life and look to change the patterns (scripts) that are unhelpful to you
- Approach life in an 'I'm OK, You're OK' life position

## Module 8 - Team working/working in partnership

Teams carry out most tasks in a modern business. As the ability to work as a team is vital to the success of the organisation, people must first become team players. They must have the ability to work with others and be able to recognise and react to factors that inhibit team growth. Participants will recognise that the 'whole is bigger (and more successful) than the sum of the parts'. They will also learn which personalities are most likely to combine effectively and how to deal with problems within the team. Participants will take part in a range of team activities that will provide them with greater experience of team dynamics. They will also have an opportunity to discuss how their team performs so that communication and understanding within the team can be enhanced and can be transferred back to the workplace.

*By the end of this day attendees will be able to:*

- Understand what makes an effective team worker
- Adapt your style to suit the situation
- Analyse their own team using the effective team model
- Apply a method of understanding their teams from Transactional Analysis