

FIT2035
Communications for IT professionals

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2010

The information contained in this unit guide is correct at time of publication. The University has the right to change any of the elements contained in this document at any time.

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FIT2035 Communications for IT professionals - Semester 1, 2010

Chief Examiner:

None provided

Lecturer(s) / Leader(s):

Clayton

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Introduction

Welcome to FIT 2035 Communications for IT Professionals unit. This 6-point unit is a core unit in all Industry-based Learning (IBL) courses offered in the Faculty of Information Technology.

This unit was primarily designed to respond industry sponsors' increasing demands that IBL students are assisted in their preparation for successful placements by a program that develops the confidence, understandings and ability to participate in personal and professional, formal and informal workplace communications.

Unit synopsis

This unit provides a theoretical and practical overview of personal and professional communications, with particular emphasis on appropriate register. Topics include: the elements of communication, barriers, cultural differences; active listening and feedback cues; public speaking; technical and business text structures and language features; workplace communications; personal and professional ethics and codes of practice; negotiation skills and conflict resolution; cross-cultural sensitivity and communications in the global economy. This unit is a hurdle requirement for Industry-Based Learning (IBL) students before their professional placements.

Learning outcomes

At the completion of this unit students will be able to:

- describe the elements of effective communication and discuss barriers to the production and reception of meaning;
- explain and demonstrate the appropriate adjustment of register in formal and informal, social and professional, verbal and non-verbal interpersonal communications;
- be sensitive to and demonstrate understanding of cultural differences;
- select and use strategies for effective and efficient productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (reading and listening) communications;
- discuss a variety of organisational structures, management styles and culture;
- discuss workplace demeanour and reporting relationships;
- produce a variety of professional writing genres in the appropriate text structure using the appropriate language features. For example, memos, emails, faxes, business letters, reports and job application letters;
- describe the purpose, protocols and procedures for, and the roles of participants, in formal/informal meetings and interviews;
- demonstrate the ability to take leadership roles and work co-operatively with peers/colleagues;
- describe several conditions and procedures for negotiation and dealing with conflict;
- describe the cross-cultural understandings and challenges of participating in the global economy;
- outline the CSA code of ethics and professional practice and analyse the competing interests and possible consequences of a variety of ethical dilemmas;
- present a formal (oral) report to peers in a formal business setting and demonstrate the ability to translate the written genre into the spoken;
- demonstrate the ability to make an effective presentation, orally and in writing, of a technical IT subject to a non-technical audience;
- demonstrate the ability to make effective use of technology in oral and written communication;
- understand current ICT trends e.g. communications groupware.

Contact hours

1 hr lecture/wk, 3 hrs laboratories or tutorial/wk

Workload

-

Unit relationships

Prerequisites

Completion of 24 points at level 1

Teaching and learning method

Teaching approach

This is an on-campus unit. Compulsory lectures and workshops are complementary to each other, and students' attendance will be taken and assessed as a part of the final results. It is also expected that students spend at least an additional 6 to 8 hours per week to study the lecture material and prepare for workshop activities.

Timetable information

For information on timetabling for on-campus classes please refer to MUTTS, <http://mutts.monash.edu.au/MUTTS/>

Tutorial allocation

On-campus students should register for tutorials/laboratories using the Allocate+ system: <http://allocate.its.monash.edu.au/>

Unit Schedule

Week	Date*	Topic	Key dates
1	01/03/10	Introduction to the unit and theory of communication	
2	08/03/10	CV and cover letter.	
3	15/03/10	Interview techniques.	
4	22/03/10	Introduction to professional writing.	
5	29/03/10	Lecture cancelled (Good Friday).	
Mid semester break			
6	12/04/10	Meeting and decision making.	
7	19/04/10	Conflict resolution and team work.	
8	26/04/10	Presentation skills.	
9	03/05/10	Report writing skills.	
10	10/05/10	Communication protocols.	
11	17/05/10	Management styles and organisational structures	
12	24/05/10	Professional ethics.	
13	31/05/10	Revision.	

*Please note that these dates may only apply to Australian campuses of Monash University. Off-shore students need to check the dates with their unit leader.

Improvements to this unit

Based on feedback from the 2009 offering of this unit we have increased the duration of lectures from 1 hour to 2 and reduced the duration of tutorials/workshops from 3 hours to 2.

Unit Resources

Prescribed text(s) and readings

There is no prescribed textbook for this unit because of the nature of the unit's contents. Instead, each week students will be provided with a list of relevant reading materials/exercise instructions, which will be used to prepare students for the next workshop.

Students will, however, find the following recommended texts highly relevant and useful not only to prepare for lectures/workshops, but also to consolidate their understanding of unit materials.

Recommended text(s) and readings

Baker E, Barrett M & Roberts L (2002) *Working Communications*. Queensland: Wiley

Bromberg M & Liebb J (1997) *The English You Need to Know*. New York: Barrons

Dwyer J (2005) *Communication in Business - Strategies and Skills*. Sydney: Prentice Hall

Eunson B (2005) *Communicating in the 21st Century*. Queensland: Wiley & Sons

Hofstede G (1991) *Culture and Organisations*. London: Harper Collins

McKenna B, Thomas G & Waddell N (2004) *Australian Guide to Corporate Communication - A Practical Handbook on Effective Writing and Speaking*. NSW: Social Science Press

Mohan T, McGregor H, Saunders S & Archee R (2004) *Communicating as Professionals*. Australia: Thomson

Windschuttle K & Elliot T (1994) *Writing Researching, Communicating*. Sydney: McGraw Hill

Study resources

Study resources we will provide for your study are:

Assessment

Overview

Examination (2 hours): 25%; In-semester assessment: 75%

Faculty assessment policy

To pass a unit which includes an examination as part of the assessment a student must obtain:

- 40% or more in the unit's examination, and
- 40% or more in the unit's total non-examination assessment, and
- an overall unit mark of 50% or more.

If a student does not achieve 40% or more in the unit examination or the unit non-examination total assessment, and the total mark for the unit is greater than 50% then a mark of no greater than 49-N will be recorded for the unit.

Assignment tasks

Assignment coversheets

Assignment coversheets are available via "Student Forms" on the Faculty website:

<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/>

You MUST submit a completed coversheet with all assignments, ensuring that the plagiarism declaration section is signed.

Assignment submission and return procedures, and assessment criteria will be specified with each assignment.

• Assignment task 1

Title:

Job application assignment

Description:

Students will submit a completed job application (i.e. a CV, a cover letter, and a document containing responses to key criteria).

Weighting:

10%

Due date:

April 1

• Assignment task 2

Title:

Final project report

Description:

Each student will conduct his or her own mini project during the semester, and produce a final report.

Weighting:

25%

Due date:

May 28

• **Assignment task 3**

Title:

Oral presentation

Description:

Students will deliver an oral presentation on the same topic they selected for the report writing assignment.

Weighting:

20%

Due date:

TBA (To be held during workshops)

• **Assignment task 4**

Title:

Attendance and participation

Description:

As teaching of this unit is heavily based on students' participation in workshop exercises and activities, students' attendance and participation will be assessed towards students' final results. This assessment includes two compulsory hurdle tasks (i.e. a project proposal and a progress report) which are to be completed during class.

Weighting:

20%

Due date:

N/A

Examination

- **Weighting:** 25%

Length: 2 hours

Type (open/closed book): Closed book

See Appendix for End of semester special consideration / deferred exams process.

Due dates and extensions

Please make every effort to submit work by the due dates. It is your responsibility to structure your study program around assignment deadlines, family, work and other commitments. Factors such as normal work pressures, vacations, etc. are not regarded as appropriate reasons for granting extensions. Students are advised to NOT assume that granting of an extension is a matter of course.

Students requesting an extension for any assessment during semester (eg. Assignments, tests or presentations) are required to submit a Special Consideration application form (in-semester exam/assessment task), along with original copies of supporting documentation, directly to their lecturer within two working days before the assessment submission deadline. Lecturers will provide specific outcomes directly to students via email within 2 working days. The lecturer reserves the right to refuse late applications.

A copy of the email or other written communication of an extension must be attached to the assignment submission.

Refer to the Faculty Special consideration webpage or further details and to access application forms:
<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/equity/special-consideration.html>

Late assignment

Assignments received after the due date will normally not be accepted unless an agreement has been reached with the lecturer prior to the due date.

Return dates

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

Appendix

Please visit the following URL: <http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/units/appendix.html> for further information about:

- Continuous improvement
- Unit evaluations
- Communication, participation and feedback
- Library access
- Monash University Studies Online (MUSO)
- Plagiarism, cheating and collusion
- Register of counselling about plagiarism
- Non-discriminatory language
- Students with disability
- End of semester special consideration / deferred exams