



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPGOV605A Persuade and influence opinion

Revision Number: 1

PSPGOV605A Persuade and influence opinion

Modification History

Not applicable.

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor

This unit covers high-level workplace communication for working at a senior level with internal and external clients, colleagues and other staff. It includes preparing for high-level communication, critically analysing and responding to opinions, persuading and influencing others, and reflecting on and honing communication strategies.

In practice, persuading and influencing others may overlap with other generalist or specialist public sector work activities such as acting ethically, complying with legislation, applying government systems, managing change, managing diversity, etc.

This is one of 5 units of competency in the *Working in Government* Competency Field that deal with communication. Related units are:

PSPGOV202B Use routine workplace communication techniques

PSPGOV312A Use workplace communication strategies

PSPGOV412A Use advanced workplace communication strategies

PSPGOV512A Use complex workplace communication skills

This is a new unit of competency, added to the *Working in Government* Competency Field of the Training Package in 2004

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

Employability skills This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency. Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in *italics* is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Prepare for high-level communication

- 1.1 *Communication objectives* are clarified, those to be *present* are confirmed and communication *mode* is identified
- 1.2 Analysis is undertaken to anticipate the likely attitudes of and positions to be taken by those present on the matters under discussion
- 1.3 *Communication styles* of those to be present are considered and their effect on the tone and likely direction/progress of the discussion is assessed
- 1.4 Critical self-evaluation of communication strengths and vulnerabilities is undertaken and compared with other participant/s knowledge, styles and likely approaches in planned encounters
- 1.5 Subject matter is researched/*organised*, key messages to be conveyed are distilled and tactics planned to utilise personal strengths and maximise outcomes for the organisation in accordance with *legislation, policy and guidelines*

2. Critically analyse and respond to opinions

- 2.1 Others are listened to critically and responsively to evaluate complex levels of meaning in spoken communication and to identify impartiality, bias or unsupported argument
- 2.2 Tone, style, non-verbal elements and points of view of speakers are noted and their use in influencing and affecting particular outcomes is considered
- 2.3 *Reaction* to speakers and their point of view is analysed to identify and manage emotional triggers and maintain objectivity
- 2.4 Opposing/challenging views are welcomed and examined for their value in achieving the same ends
- 2.5 Communication is examined for subtext, significant inclusions and exclusions, socio-cultural values, attitudes and assumptions
- 2.6 Complex concepts and ideas are explored to clarify understanding, and to challenge and justify interpretations based on underlying assumptions, beliefs and values

3. Persuade and influence others

- 3.1 *Communication approach* is chosen and used to maximise effect with the given audience
- 3.2 Sustained points of view are asserted with determination and conviction
- 3.3 Content and approach are modified when speaking to an

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

unresponsive audience, and diversions and unexpected questions handled confidently

3.4 A variety of *verbal and non-verbal behaviour* is used to explain abstract ideas and expand on complex issues to maintain listener interest

3.5 Complex questions and arguments are responded to quickly and saliently, backed by reasoned explanation

3.6 Disagreements or conflicting personalities are handled objectively and agreements are negotiated where possible, concluding with positive summaries of achievement

4. Reflect on and hone communication strategies

4.1 Feedback from others is obtained, outcomes are assessed and underlying interactions and motivations analysed

4.2 Own vulnerability to emotional and other seductive appeals is analysed dispassionately

4.3 Lessons learnt are articulated and used to underpin future interactions

4.4 *Sophisticated language structures and features* that influence audiences to a preferred point of view are developed and practised

4.5 Creative and innovative communication strategies are explored and practised for a range of workplace applications in accordance with organisational requirements

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- applying legislation, regulations and policies relating to communication in the public sector
- analysing and using language structures and features that influence the interpretation of spoken communication
- interacting responsively, critically and confidently with both familiar and unfamiliar groups on specialised topics in formal and informal workplace situations
- speaking with confidence and listening evaluatively and critically
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying procedures relating to occupational health and safety and environment in the context of high-level communication

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to communication in the public sector
- the power and effect of spoken language
- stylistic devices and their ethical use for calculated effect
- the ways in which socio-cultural factors, language features and structures, and non-verbal elements combine to influence the interpretation of spoken communication
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- public sector legislation such as occupational health and safety and environment in the context of high-level communication

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together

- *Pre-requisite* units that must be achieved prior to this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-requisite* units that must be assessed with this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-assessed units* that may be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to:

PSPETHC601B Maintain and enhance confidence in public service

PSPGOV601B Apply government systems

PSPGOV602B Establish and maintain strategic networks

PSPGOV604A Foster leadership and innovation

PSPLEGN601B Manage compliance with legislation in the public sector

PSPMNGT604B Manage change

PSPMNGT605B Manage diversity

PSPMNGT606B Manage quality client service

PSPMNGT613A Develop partnering arrangements

PSPMNGT614A Facilitate knowledge management

PSPOHS602A Manage workplace safety

Overview of evidence requirements

In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms:

- the knowledge requirements of this unit
- the skill requirements of this unit
- application of Employability Skills as they relate to this unit
- opinion influenced in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Resources required to carry out assessment

These resources include:

- legislation, policy, procedures and protocols relating to public

EVIDENCE GUIDE

sector communication

- current theory and practice on influencing skills for the public sector
- case studies and workplace scenarios to capture the range of situations likely to be encountered when persuading and influencing opinion

Where and how to assess evidence

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when persuading and influencing opinion, including coping with difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine
- opinion influenced in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time).

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations.

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- demonstration
- observation
- portfolios
- questioning
- scenarios
- simulation or role plays
- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of

Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the

EVIDENCE GUIDE

assessment

competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in *italics* in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

Communication

objectives may include

- share information
- brief Minister
- reach consensus
- shape opinion
- influence policy
- represent the organisation's position
- represent the business unit's interests in internal negotiations
- resolve differences
- negotiate a joint position/compromise
- build reputation (of self and organisation)
- market services

Those to be present may include

- peers
- colleagues
- those senior or junior to the position
- staff from other agencies
- senior executives/chief executive
- ministerial liaison personnel
- Minister
- Minister's chief of staff

RANGE STATEMENT

- Mode of communication may include***
- telephone
 - teleconference
 - video conference
 - Internet (online forums)
 - face-to-face
 - one-on-one, or in a group
 - forum, seminar or conference
- Communication styles may include***
- inter-cultural, equity or diversity considerations
 - consultative
 - collaborative
 - competitive
 - confrontational
 - soft
 - passive
 - assertive
 - aggressive
 - reasonable
 - bombastic
 - humorous
- Organisation of subject matter may include***
- identifying features, advantages and benefits and aligning evidence/examples
 - anticipating likely disagreements and structuring material to address these
- Legislation, policy and guidelines may include***
- State/Territory and Commonwealth legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines and standards relating to exchange of information in the public sector, such as:
 - ethics and accountability guidelines/codes of practice
 - information security standards
 - principles of equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity
 - freedom of information and privacy acts
 - intellectual property guidelines and policy
 - fraud standards
 - professional liability requirements

RANGE STATEMENT

Reaction to speakers may include

- own reaction
- others present

Communication approach may include

- catering to political sensitivities
- working within government processes and operational frameworks
- balancing intellectual debate and action
- considering wider organisational/public sector issues
- using language calculated to appeal emotionally to a particular audience, such as humorous, serious, cajoling, authoritarian
- speaking with confidence and authority
- covering cultural, ethnic, diversity or equity considerations
- selecting a communication style appropriate to the occasion/audience such as consultative, collaborative, assertive, reasonable etc

Verbal and non-verbal behaviour may include

- inclusive language, ideas and information
- congruent speech and body language
- speaking with confidence
- impartiality
- responsiveness
- drawing on different sources of information

Sophisticated language structures and features may include

- use of metaphors and similes
- use of analogy, imagery and other comparisons
- stylistic devices such as using pronounced downward inflection to convey 'the final word', or upward inflection to invite opinion/agreement
- use of passive voice
- using personal names repeatedly to convey intimacy or sincerity
- using 'we' rather than 'I' to infer corporate rather than personal position
- tone, style and point of view
- rhetorical devices
- irony

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Competency field Working in Government