

COURSE SYLLABUS

Building Your Employability (Interpersonal) Skills Portfolio

INSTRUCTORS: Dennis O'Connor and Penny A. Drain

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Class Hours: Two, three-hour sessions per week for nine (9) weeks
54 total hours

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public-sector research indicates that companies (employers) from emerging industries seek experienced workers who have good interpersonal skills, such as employee relations, managing behaviors, communication, problem solving, conflict resolution, teamwork abilities and customer service. Strong interpersonal skills enable you to work amicably and efficiently with internal and external customers.

Given this need in the marketplace, Novi Community Education developed a 45-hour, 15-session, 4-unit seminar focused on "Building Your Employability Skills Portfolio."

This course has been certified by the Michigan Institute for Educational Management (MIEM) in Lansing, and has been awarded 4.5 SB-CEUs.

The entire curriculum was launched successfully and taught through the Novi Community Education Department in September, 2009.

The seminar, structured in 15, 3-hour sessions, features four focused units on:

- 1. Employee Relations**
- 2. Managing Your Behaviors**
- 3. Customer Service**
- 4. Generational Issues**

Additionally, the course includes an optional fifth unit, "Job Application Preparation," with three topics (*i.e., resume writing, interviewing skills-tips-techniques and job search strategies*).

In total, the 5-unit course consists of 18 separate topics, each taught in 3-hour blocks for a complete and comprehensive examination of what employers need and expect from potential new hires.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

The method of instruction includes:

- A pre-test will be administered to assess what the class understands on specific concepts (*Instruction then will be “targeted” to concepts that need further student development*)
- 15-20 minute “lecturettes”
- Large-group discussions
- Small-group work
- Case studies
- Interactive hands-on exercises/activities to engage students
- Selected Videos:
 - Peacocks in the Land of Penguins
 - Work teams and Wizard of Oz
 - 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
 - Sexual Harassment: Is It or Isn't It?
 - Clip from Five Easy Pieces
 - Remember Me
 - Fish

B. COURSE UNITS/TOPICS

UNIT/TOPIC	VIDEOS/CASE STUDIES
UNIT #1: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (<i>Delivering Exceptional Service to Internal Customers</i>)	
1. Respecting One Another – Diversity and Inclusion	Peacocks in the Land of Penguins: A modern-day fable about the perils and possibilities of being different in organizations. It explores the most important requirement for organizational success – acceptance and trust
2. Working in Teams	Work Teams and Wizard of Oz: Using spectacular footage from The Wizard of Oz as a powerful metaphor, management expert Ken Blanchard teaches six keys to successful teamwork
3. Dealing with Difficult Co-Workers	Case Study applying techniques for dealing with difficult co-workers
4. Communicating with Co-Workers	Interactive Exercises
5. Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills and Behaviors	Interactive Exercises

UNIT #2: MANAGING YOUR BEHAVIORS

6. Accountability & Responsibility	7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Focuses on the 'taking responsibility,' Part of Habit 1: Proactively.
7. Harassment and Sexual Harassment	Sexual Harassment: Is It or Isn't It?: Explores the basic premises of Sexual Harassment and specific
8. Workplace Violence	Case Study applying techniques for identifying signs of workplace violence and minimizing workplace violence
9. Conflict Resolution	Interactive Exercises

UNIT #3: CUSTOMER SERVICE (*Delivering Exceptional Service to External Customers*)

10. Basic Customer Service Behaviors and Attitudes	<p>Clip from Five Easy Pieces: This video clip focuses on what customer service is and is not.</p> <p>Remember Me: Illustrates that good customer service is as simple as common courtesy. But common courtesy can be hard to find these days. Remember Me focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Customers can forgive mistakes but not bad attitudes</i>• <i>Poorly treated customers take their business elsewhere and spread the word</i>• <i>Exceeding customer expectations is the key to building customer loyalty</i> <p>Fish: Explores a work environment in which people are truly connected to their work, to their co-workers and to their customers. It examines the Fish philosophy: Play, Make Their Day, Be There and Choose Your Attitude.</p>
11. Customer Service Standards and Expectations	Interactive Exercises
12. Handling Customer Objections	Case Study applying techniques for dealing with customer objections
13. Dealing with Difficult Customers	Case Study applying techniques for dealing with difficult customers

UNIT #4: GENERATIONAL ISSUES

14. Understanding Generational Similarities and Differences

Case Study applying techniques for dealing with generations different from you

15. Being Supervised by Individuals From Other Generations

Case Study applying techniques for being supervised by someone other than your generation

UNIT #5: JOB APPLICATION PREPARATION (Optional)

16. Resume Writing

Interactive Exercises

17. Job Search Strategies

Interactive Exercises

18. Interviewing Skills, Tips & Techniques

Interactive Exercises

C. COURSE OBJECTIVES

UNIT #1: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (*Delivering Exceptional Service to Internal Customers*)

1. Respecting One Another – Diversity and Inclusion
 - Promote understanding of differences in order to build effective working relationships and teamwork
 - Define Diversity
 - Distinguish between visible and invisible diversity
 - Understand how cultural issues impact internal customer working relationships and teamwork
 - Understand the impact of diversity on building internal customer working relationships and teamwork
 - Practice working with Internal Customers who are different

2. Working in Teams
 - Understand team development
 - Recognize your impact on a team
 - Apply skills that support the team's ability to meet objectives
 - Assess team behaviors
 - Encourage interaction among group members
 - Discourage 'we versus they' thinking

3. Dealing with Difficult Co-Workers
 - Understand your reaction to the internal customer who is difficult
 - Name the difficulty
 - Understand your reaction to the difficulty
 - Understand how to deal with the internal customer who is difficult
 - Listen to understand the problem from the internal customer's perspective.
 - Explore the root cause of the problem with the internal customer.
 - Apply a problem solving model to the internal customer's problem.
 - Engage the internal customer in the solution.

4. Communicating with Co-Workers
 - Practice a basic Communication Model of sending and receiving messages
 - Examine the effect of your Non-Verbal Communication on internal communication
 - Practice Active Listening and Speaking Skills with Internal Customers
 - Practice the A.C.E.S. approach to communication with Internal Customers

5. Problem Solving, Decision Making Skills/Behaviors
 - Use process tools for effective problem identification
 - Generate and analyze alternative solutions
 - Use decision making tools
 - Consider the impact of alternatives

UNIT #2: MANAGING YOUR BEHAVIORS

6. Accountability & Responsibility
 - Define the terms
 - Understand the impact of absenteeism and being prompt
 - Maintain appropriate grooming and hygiene
 - Understand impact of attending to personal business when working
 - Manage stressful situations
 - Carry out instructions

7. Harassment and Sexual Harassment
 - Understand Harassment/Sexual Harassment
 - Definitions
 - Legal foundation
 - Examples
 - Understand your responsibility
 - What to do if you are sexually harassed
 - What to do if you are accused of sexual harassment

8. Workplace Violence
 - Understand a basic Workplace Violence policy and established procedures
 - Awareness of and basic guidelines for identifying and reporting violent or threatening behavior
 - Use techniques to de-escalate incidents

9. Conflict Resolution
 - Be able to name the conflict
 - Understand your reaction to conflict
 - Identify causes to conflict
 - Assess your style for resolving conflict
 - Apply conflict resolution techniques

UNIT #3: CUSTOMER SERVICE (*Delivering Exceptional Service to External Customers*)

10. Basic Customer Service Behaviors and Attitudes

- Define the terms
 - Customer
 - Customer Service
- Understand:
 - Who is your customer?
 - What do they want?
 - How are they treated?
 - How do you know?
- Distinguish effective customer service from ineffective customer service
- Practice Active Listening and Speaking Skills
 - List the components of a basic communications model
 - List and give examples of the main types of communication
 - Discuss the A.C.E.S. approach to communication
- Assess personal Customer Service strengths and areas of improvement
- Distinguish between Customer Service and Customer Focus
- Examine causes underlying poor attitudes that affect customer service
- Identify solutions to the poor attitudes that affect customer service
- Practice 'attitude changes' necessary for exceptional customer service
- Assess personal Customer Focus strengths and areas of improvement

11. Customer Service Standards and Expectations

- Identify typical standards for exceptional customer service
- Examine the core beliefs that underlie the standards
- Identify the dimensions of customer satisfaction
- Learn from customer data
- Practice the standards of exceptional customer service and the dimensions of customer satisfaction

12. Handling Customer Objections

- Identify common customer objections
- Practice a problem solving model to handle customers' objections
- Use case studies to work through various customers' objections
- Practice Active Listening and Speaking Skills when working through customers' objections
 - List the components of a basic communications model
 - List and give examples of the main types of communication
 - Discuss the A.C.E.S. approach to communication

13. Practice Dealing with Difficult Customers

- Manage yourself first:
 - Maintain self-control
 - Manage own emotions
 - Understand impact of making assumptions
 - Check on stress tolerance
- Understand your reaction to the customer who is difficult
 - Name the difficulty
 - Understand your reaction to the difficulty
- Understand how to deal with the customer who is difficult
 - Listen to understand the problem from the customer's perspective.
 - Explore the root cause of the problem with the customer.
 - Apply a problem solving model to the customer's problem.
 - Engage the customer in the solution.

UNIT #4: GENERATIONAL ISSUES

14. Understanding Generational Similarities and Differences

- Identify War Generation, Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X and Generation Y
- Examine generations based on:
 - Decision Making Styles
 - Loyalty Philosophy
 - Key to Career Advancement
 - Key to Motivation
 - Feedback
 - Approach to Information Sharing
 - Philosophy on Pay
 - Interaction Goal
 - Work and Life

15. Being Supervised by Individuals From Other Generations

- Understand the things that are most important to the supervisor when it comes to getting a job done
- Explore how to 'close the culture gap' regarding:
 - Solving problems and making decisions
 - Loyalty
 - Advancement
 - Motivation
 - Sharing information
 - Interacting
 - Feedback

UNIT #5: JOB APPLICATION PREPARATION (Optional)

16. Resume Writing

- Explain two to four purposes of the resume
- List two types of resumes
- Know when to use or not use a specific type of resume
- Include the basics of resume writing when writing a resume
- Practice writing a resume
- Know what not to include in a resume
- Give feedback from the employers perspective based on red flags

17. Job Search Strategies

- Explore successful job search strategies
- Understand job search 'blunders'
- Apply job search strategies

18. Interviewing Skills, Tips & Techniques

- Explore successful interviewing, tips and techniques
- Understand interviewing 'blunders'
- Practice "behavioral" interviews

D. TEXTBOOK AND REQUIRED TOOLS OR SUPPLIES

Building Your Employability (Interpersonal) Skills Portfolio Workbook

- *Class Binder with 18 separate tabs*
- *1 tab per topic*
- *Each tab includes handouts, exercises, reading materials, case studies, etc. focused on that specific topic*
- *Students take home the Binder, upon course certification/completion, and use it as a Reference Guide*

E. GRADING PLAN

Letter grade for each unit, based on this weighting scale

The first 4 units = <u>15% each</u> =	60% total
Attendance =	10%
Overall Class Participation =	10%
Homework =	10%
Resume writing =	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL:	100%

COURSE COMPONENT SPECIFICS

Exams will be conducted at the end of each of the five units (*Employee Relations, Managing Your Behaviors, Customer Service, Generational Issues and Job Application Preparation.*)

- One (1) make-up exam date will be scheduled for participants who miss it
- Homework will be assigned at the end of each week with deadlines for the following week

Designers/Instructors:

Dennis O'Connor

Dennis (DOC) O'Connor has more than 23 years of experience in the training, communications, and marketing industries. DOC has worked as a Small Business Owner and Classroom Instructor for the past 10 years, serving Fortune 100 companies such as Ford, General Motors, Nissan, Saab, Motorola Paging, Bell South, UAW-GM and UAW-Ford. Prior to that, he served as a Vice President-Training Operations Director in a sales-support role, focusing on the successful execution of training, incentive and performance improvement projects for Detroit automotive clients.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism and Mathematics (*with secondary teaching certification*) from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and an MBA in Marketing/Management from Wayne State University-Detroit. He also is a **Certified Focus Group Moderator** from the Burke Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio.

He is the co-author of a newly-published book called **TARGETED TRAINING, A "How To" Guide for Changing Employee Behavior in 30-Minute Intervals.**

Selected Accomplishments:

- Sold, managed and produced the design, development and delivery of a \$10-million Oldsmobile Training Matrix program – a comprehensive creative solution to integrating all the national training and rewards programs for dealership personnel. This account started at \$300,000.
- Spearheaded two (2) separate corporate culture initiatives through Quality and Diversity training programs for labor and management personnel at both UAW-Ford and UAW-GM.
- Organized and facilitated an extensive recruiting/hiring process to staff a \$12-million Saturn launch-training initiative.
- Managed vision alignment and business objectives during a reorganization process for a 6-person sports department in the newspaper industry.
- Managed and produced the design, development and delivery of a \$3-million Audi communications/training network during a very complex political time when Audi products were under media attack for acceleration problems.

Memberships:

- Michigan Minority Business Development Council (MMBDC)
- American Marketing Association (AMA)-Detroit Chapter
- National Writers Union, UAW Local 1981/AFL-CIO

Penny Drain

Penny A. Drain has 22 years of consulting, instructional design, and instructor experience with various industries including manufacturing, utility, health services, managed care organizations, **education**, **government**, retail, and **non-profit**.

Penny has worked extensively in the area of interpersonal skills, customer service, health & safety, quality, diversity and processes within **government**, manufacturing, utilities and **health-care** organizations. She has:

- Designed and developed “Manufacturing 101” sessions for a Tier I auto supplier. These sessions involved: Concern Reports, CIP, Control Plans, Solving Customer Problems, Housekeeping, Health & Safety issues, IPFMEA, Reducing Scrap and Leveled Scheduling
- Tailored and facilitated public-sector Leadership Program workshops in the following areas:
 - Implementing Customer Service Strategies
 - Coaching and Development
 - Facilitating Meetings
- Tailored consultant-owned training and developed material for:
 - 12-week (2 hours/week) Extraordinary Customer Service workshop for an IT department
- Provided 1-on-1 coaching/development in the public-sector based on areas such as:
 - **Building Relationships**
 - **Defining What The Customer Wants**
 - **Listening**
 - **Creating a Collaborative Environment**
 - **Working Effectively with others in team environment**
 - **Showing Respect Based On Culture And Gender**
 - **Focusing On Me As The Customer**
 - **Showing Respect For Others**
- Created ½ day “learning labs” on the following topics:
 - **Coaching**
 - **Effective Participation Skills in Meetings**
 - **Meetings**
 - **Performance Conversations**
 - **Process Tools**

He is the co-author of a newly-published book called **TARGETED TRAINING, A “How To” Guide for Changing Employee Behavior in 30-Minute Intervals**.

Penny earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the Ohio University. She has continued her education in areas *i.e.*, *Systematic Teamwork, Problem Solving, Problem Solving and Planning, Instructional Design and Development, Developing Procedures, Policies and Documentation, Project Management, Time Management, Facilitation Skills, Facilitating Meetings*.

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