Communicating Effectively with Stakeholders
Government Office for the English Regions

The Government Office Network (GO) represented twelve Whitehall departments, and were involved in regenerating communities, fighting crime, tackling housing needs, improving public health, raising standards in education and skills, tackling countryside issues and reducing unemployment.

Government Offices were located in the East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber regions.

Communicaid

Communicaid is a global culture and communication skills consultancy that assists the world’s leading organisations to mitigate the risks and maximise the opportunities of working in a complex and ever-changing international environment. We work with international organisations such as the Government Offices for the English Regions to provide a complete suite of consultancy services as well as targeted intercultural, language and communication skills training.
Communicating Effectively with Stakeholders

As the Government Offices’ role became more complex, their Policy and Learning Centre required a communication skills training partner that would work closely with them to improve GO staff’s ability to communicate effectively with their stakeholders. Clear and concise communication is a key skill for all civil servants who need to present a professional image to the public, influence policy and facilitate meetings. Following a competitive tender process, Communicaid was selected to provide a wide range of communication skills programmes.

Training Objectives

The key requirements of the training were to:

- Raise awareness of the key elements of effective communication
- Give participants the skills and knowledge to write, speak and present with clarity, accuracy and confidence
- Increase participants’ ability to develop and maintain effective networks through improved listening and questioning skills
- Develop participants’ facilitation and influencing skills
- Raise awareness of different communication channels and their benefits and challenges

Challenges

The main challenges were seen as:

- Marketing the workshops effectively to ensure good and consistent take up and attendance
- Identifying the range of abilities likely to attend each session and adapting the training to meet all requirements
- Developing an impact management process that ensured delegates applied their new skills into their individual job roles and that GO saw a real return on their investment
**Training Approach**

Communicaid held in-depth discussions with the GO’s Policy and Learning Centre Team to establish the organisational challenges and objectives. Three one-day training programmes were developed which employees could attend either as stand-alone courses or as a complete series of training modules.

Communicaid developed a two-stage impact-management process to follow on from each training programme. This incorporated post-session feedback and a one-month follow on interview to ensure that delegates had met their learning objectives and incorporated their action planning into their working practices. This process also required delegates’ line managers to comment on improved behaviours and ongoing challenges.

**Our Solution**

The following programmes were designed:

*Written Communication Skills* equips participants with the confidence and skills to produce professional written communication which has a real impact on the reader.

*Physical and Verbal Communication Skills* provides delegates with techniques and skills to be able to communicate effectively whether in meetings or delivering formal presentations. Delegates are filmed throughout the day and given personalised feedback from their trainer and peers.

*Interpersonal Skills* enables delegates to develop their own skills enabling them to build and maintain more confident and effective professional relationships.

**Results**

The feedback has shown that delegates now have structured frameworks and techniques from which they can communicate effectively. By adopting a more sophisticated and dynamic approach to their communication, GO hopes that employees will become more effective leaders in the future.