

University of North Texas at Dallas  
Spring 2016 Syllabus  
Management 3330-001: Communication in Business-3 units  
Tuesdays 4-6:50pm, Dallas Bldg 1 #102

Instructor: Mark Treger

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**Best way to reach me is by cell phone 8am-8pm 7 days a week, or in person immediately before or after class.** Office hours: Mon 6-7pm; Tues noon-1pm, Wed 1-2pm.

Also *by appointment* Mon 5-6pm, Tues 7-8pm, Wed 9-10am; other by appointment.

Course focuses on development of interpersonal business communication skills. This includes effective written, oral and non-verbal communications, as well as active listening. Effective business communications requires logical structuring of thinking (outlining) as the foundation for effective speaking and writing. Course begins from this point, and addresses outlining and writing of business letters, memos, letter reports, presentations, proposals and requests for proposal (RFPs). Course also addresses oral communications (rhetoric) including presentation delivery, and understanding and application of professional selling/negotiating principles and practices, including communication, listening, selling yourself and a business sales model.

Two short texts, **The Pyramid Principle, Logic in Thinking and Writing** by Barbara Minto (any edition over last 40 years), and **SPIN Selling: Situation, Problem, Implication, Needs-Payoff** by Neil Rackham (1988 or any later edition) published by McGraw-Hill, are used as references for lecture and discussion. Both texts are readily available used for under \$40. A ***PDF of SPIN SELLING might be found on the internet. Instructor will also hand out supplemental material in class.***

Course grade is the sum of grades on 10 writing and speaking deliverables (no exams). Each of the 10 deliverables is worth up to 12 points. For the overall course, 90=A, 80=B, 70=C, 60=D. Instructor reserves right to raise course grade as much as 5 points for **consistent, high-quality class participation**, as judged by the instructor. **Students who miss more than 3 weekly classes will fail the course.** The 10 individual deliverables, each worth up to 12 points, include: 5 individual written communications (discussion outline for “2 minute commercial”/ strengths, accomplishments etc, 2 short reports/synopsis with outline on the 2 texts, resume, cover letter), 1 groups oral/ written presentations (on one of the two texts, format prescribed in class), and 4 individual oral communications (short presentation on self/“2 minute commercial,” web cam mock interviews, “sell self” interview, and instrumentation sales call).

The 5 individual written deliverables may each be **re-written twice to improve grade**. Mock interviews with prospective employers **may** be available for up to 5 points **extra credit, depending on availability**. An **extra credit paper**, with outline (2-5 pages single spaced) on business etiquette & attire, worth up to 5 points, will also be an option.

The goal of this course is to expose students to basic business writing and speaking concepts, and to help students build skills in outlining, writing, interrogation, persuasion, self-presentation, and

impression management. Learning outcomes are for the student to develop facility with basic outlining & writing, presenting, observing, listening, questioning, feeding-back, closing and following up.

The course is taught from perspective of a practitioner who consulted in marketing strategy for 20 years, and sold & delivered millions of dollars a year of consulting services including over 100 major client proposals, final reports & presentations. The writing text used is a standard text used to teach management consultants effective communications across a number of consulting firms. The selling text has also been used extensively in industry.

The big ideas of the course are:

1. Effective communication (oral & written) is structured intentionally, up-front (outlining),
2. Effective communication begins with end in mind (need know what want up-front), and
3. Effective communication (oral & written) includes intentional tone & style.

We will start with a brief discussion of the three big ideas above, and apply them to a topic you may know—yourself. You will briefly research, outline and present a **short outline and report** on your professional/vocational likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, major accomplishment(s) and major mistakes/lessons learned, along with a “2 minute commercial” (aka elevator speech) selling yourself to an employer in your chosen field. Students will also write a **resume** in the instructor’s specific format (specific written guidelines will be provided for “2 minute commercial” & resume).

In parallel, we will review two short texts: Barbara Minto’s **Pyramid Principle: Logic in Thinking & Writing** and Neal Rackham’s **SPIN Selling** approach to oral communication in the form of selling and negotiating. Each student will write a short **individual** synopsis report, with outline of Minto’s approach and Rackham’s approach (each approximately 2-5 pages single spaced), and be prepared to deliver a short oral synopsis of one of the two texts (assigned by instructor). In addition, students will work in **groups of five or less** to develop & deliver a short presentation (format provided in class by instructor) explaining their collective synopsis of one of the two texts.

We will discuss selected types of business writing, including:

**1. Letters & memos,**

- a. Requests (interviews, meetings, actions, RFPs),
- b. Notifications (delivery of news-good, neutral, bad), and
- c. Letter Reports (extended notifications).

**2. Presentation reports,**

**3. Proposals,**

**4. Discussion guides & agendas.**

Students will be given the opportunity to write examples from several major types of business communication, on various topics over the course of the semester, including: cover letters requesting a job interview, short reports, with outlines, and presentations on **Pyramid Principle** and **SPIN Selling** texts, resumes, and discussion guides for 2 minute commercial & for instrumentation sales call (explained below).

We will briefly discuss non-verbal communication & business etiquette (including business attire), and briefly discuss some major differences in non-verbal communication & etiquette in other cultures.

Finally, each student will be given **three opportunities** to “sell themselves” as effective oral communicators. The **first** is 10 on-line mock job interviews using an interactive web cam software tool provided by UNT Dallas career placement office. The **second** is a brief job interview with the instructor (your choice of job). This will be in class, with constructive feedback from classmates & instructor. You will use your resume in the interview. A list of possible questions and briefing material to prepare will be provided. The **third** is a sales call to discuss a new major sales opportunity with an established customer of process instrumentation (details below), in class with constructive feedback from classmates & instructor. In addition, a mock interview with a prospective employer **may** also be available for **extra credit, depending on availability (in addition to extra credit paper on business etiquette & attire)**.

You should record & review your 10 web cam practice interviews, to identify your improvement opportunities. Typically students who earn an “A” on the instructor sell your self interview do more than 10 online practice interviews with the web cam software tool.

For your job interview with the instructor you will use your resume, and need do basic research on the company, develop thoughtful selling answers to likely interviewer questions (list of likely questions provided) and prepare some good questions for the interviewer. You will receive candid, constructive feedback from the instructor & your classmates. The interview and feedback will likely last approximately 10 minutes. If your resume is poorly written vs. the instructor’s guidelines your grade on the sell yourself interview will be reduced.

In the **third oral communication/selling project** you will role-play a new sales rep selling premium measurement instrumentation for a process industry, and the instructor will role play a prospective industrial customer. You will need to prepare for an initial sales call on either the plant manager, the instrumentation engineer, or a construction project manager. Each of these three cares primarily about different aspects of the purchase, so you will need to be ready to sell to all three--identify their buyer values, interests and concerns, and determine how to address the challenges inherent in a group buying decision. Your product has higher price, but lower lifetime total cost of ownership than the two alternatives. Your sales call will last 5-10 minutes, in which time you need to qualify the lead as a potential buyer, help the prospect identify the needs, transition to a sales mode, effect linkages between your product’s features and the prospect’s needs, monitor the prospect’s attitude toward your logic and offering, demonstrate value, and proceed to the next step in the selling process (whatever that is). This will draw heavily on the **SPIN Selling** material we will have reviewed.

### **Course Schedule (subject to revision)**

**1/19:** Introduction and overview of syllabus. Introduce 3 big ideas for effective business communication. Briefly outline various major types of written and oral business communication. Introduce Barbara Minto’s **Pyramid Principle** approach to effective business communication,

and Neal Rackham's **SPIN Selling** approach to effective selling/persuasive rhetoric for high dollar repeat sales, as contrasted to traditional 1-time sales models. Discuss "sell your self" as example of effective written & oral business communications--you as a product, your interests, strengths & accomplishments, your frailties, disinclinations & lessons learned from mistakes. Discuss techniques for effective resume writing and job interviewing (hand out material), anticipating questions & effective answers, following up. Begin to **read Pyramid Principle** and **SPIN Selling** texts. *Outline your interests, strengths, accomplishments, disinclinations, frailties, major mistakes & lessons learned; target career/industry, and your resume (1st drafts due 2/2).*  
**1/26:** Recap/elaborate on 3 big ideas for effective business communication. Recap major types of written & oral business communication. Discuss Minto's **Pyramid Principle** and application, as well as Rackham's **SPIN Selling** and application. Begin writing short synopsis of each (each synopsis 2-5 pages single spaced, 1st drafts due by 2/16). Recap effective resume elements. Discuss non-verbal communication & business etiquette in the U.S. and selected differences in some other cultures.

**2/2: Student "2 minute commercial" presentations, including presentation of outline on strengths, interests etc., with constructive feedback (35). 1<sup>st</sup> draft resumes are due.**

**2/9:** Student outlines and draft resumes **returned with editorial comments for revision.**

Discuss & work on revisions in class, with instructor feedback. Discuss business etiquette, attire & tone.

**2/16: Student synopsis papers with outlines due on Pyramid Principle and SPIN Selling. Extensive in-class discussion, with each student expected to deliver short oral synopsis on one of two texts.**

**2/23: Student synopsis papers returned with editorial comments for revision. Job interview draft cover letters are due.** Discuss & work on in class, with instructor feedback.

**3/1: Group presentations on Pyramid Principle or SPIN Selling (7). Schedule & prepare for "sell your self" interviews. Final revisions to resumes, outlines are due.**

**3/8:** Begin "sell your self" interviews with feedback from instructor & class (12). **Final cover letters are due.**

**3/22:** Continue "sell your self" interviews with feedback from instructor & class (12).

**3/29:** Complete "sell your self" interviews with feedback from instructor & class (11). **Initial drafts of any extra credit papers on business etiquette & attire are due.**

**4/5:** Recap lessons from "sell your self" interviews. Briefly discuss alternative sale organizations and incentives. Introduce and **schedule** students' "sales rep call" to sell process instrumentation (highest initial price, but lowest total lifecycle cost of ownership) to the plant manager, instrumentation/maintenance engineer, or construction project manager. Students prepare to sell to any of three potential customers, each of whom has a different role and interests in the purchase decision. Sales calls role-played with instructor in front of class, with feedback from instructor and class.

**4/12:** Begin sales rep calls with feedback from instructor & class (12).

**4/19:** Continue sales rep calls with feedback from class & instructor (12).

**4/26:** Complete sales rep calls (11). **Final revisions to any extra credit papers on business etiquette & attire are due.**

**5/3:** Recap lessons & course concepts. **Courses grades will be available to review & discuss.**

### ***University Policies and Procedures***

**Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance):** The UNT Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. For more information, visit the Office of Disability Accommodation/Student Development Office.

**Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness Policy:** Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement of all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in your feedback as to how this class can be more effective, and value your completion of the SETE as an important part of your class participation.

**Exam Policy:** Exams should be taken as scheduled. Makeup exams will only be allowed for documented emergencies (see student handbook).

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct and Academic Dishonesty Policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct at [http://unt.edu/csrr/ student conduct/index.html](http://unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html) <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student> for complete provisions of this code.

**Bad Weather Policy:** On days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas main voice mail 972/780-3600 or search postings on campus website [www.unt.edu/dallas](http://www.unt.edu/dallas) Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information so they will receive this information automatically.

**Attendance and Participation Policy:** The university attendance policy is in effect for this course. Class attendance and participation is expected because the class is designed as a shared learning experience and because essential information not in the text will be discussed in class. Students are responsible to notify the instructor if they miss class and for what reason, and are responsible to make up any work they missed. It is recommended that each student obtain a copy of a classmate's notes to review, for any class they miss, and follow up with instructor.

**Diversity/Tolerance Policy:** Remarks that violate the Student Code of Conduct regarding nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders or other ascribed statuses will be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities as the instructor deems appropriate.