

# COMMUNICATING UP

## VITAL LEADERSHIP



As a supervisor, team leader or manager, you must become a communication expert. Your job not only requires you to communicate effectively with your team, but you also must learn to communicate effectively with your boss and other members of senior management. If you often feel like you're not accomplishing what you need to during meetings with your boss, then your "communicating up" skills might need improvement.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH SUPERIORS BRINGS SUCCESS

Meeting with a superior requires preparation very similar to that needed when meeting with team members. Employees must take the time to plan and consider the best approach and ensure that their messages are understood clearly.

The Vital Learning Communicating Up™ program teaches supervisors, team leaders and managers how to hold more successful meetings with their managers and other members of senior management, transforming these meetings into positive, productive experiences. Communicating up is not difficult, but it does require employees to empathize with their managers, as well as to understand the manager's specific style and work challenges. Because of the pressures that accompany senior management, employees must use meeting time wisely, focusing on providing information that will help the senior manager effectively solve problems and make critical decisions for the department and the company.

Moreover, the ability of first-line managers to effectively communicate up the line affects team member retention, overall productivity and even profitability. A manager must represent the team's efforts and challenges appropriately, so issues and problems can be addressed while corrective

action can still be taken. An important part of this type of communication is mutual agreement about what must be done, why it's important and when it will be accomplished. The Communicating Up program helps managers achieve that fundamental agreement.

Communicating Up provides the tools necessary to help employees understand a senior manager's communication style, deliver bad news with grace, communicate group or employee achievements, and maintain the manager's attention during a meeting. With a focus on preparation and clear commitments, Communicating Up can help even experienced managers build a more effective process for communicating and collaborating within the organizational hierarchy.

Throughout the course, managers review video presentations and case studies, participate in group discussions, practice new skills, and receive immediate feedback. The program provides them with implementation tools, a troubleshooting guide and additional resources to help them apply the skills they have learned on the job.

# ESSENTIAL COURSE MATERIALS

Communicating Up is available in classroom, eLearning and blended formats to accommodate any organization or type of business. Each course includes the following course materials:

## Facilitator Guide

- Provides complete instructions about how to conduct the course
- Supplies explanatory information for the trainer, sample trainer narrative, transcripts of video segments and facilitation notes
- Includes the facilitator resource CD, which contains a PowerPoint presentation, additional resources, reproducible pages from the facilitator guide and a participant workbook

## Participant Workbook

- Provides exercises, forms, skill practice aids and a video synopsis
- Offers a job aids section with tools and resources for applying course skills
- Includes a Memory Jogger Card™, which gives leaders a handy reminder of the course's skill points

## Video

- Presents an introduction followed by a scenario depicting positive use of the program's skill points
- Provides video segments that focus on modeling positive behavior for skill practices
- Offers scenarios for both office and industrial/other settings



## BENEFITS OF COMMUNICATING UP

Organizations can offer the course in the format that works best for them — classroom, eLearning or blended.

Program is designed for six to 18 participants to complete in four hours.

Course participants receive hands-on experience practicing the program's skills and methods.

Participants learn the importance of framing all communication with senior management in terms of their self-interest.

Participants learn to enter meetings armed with a well-planned and clearly stated objective.

Participants learn to clearly link their objectives with facts that support their plans and goals.

Participants learn to work with their managers to uncover questions or reservations the manager may have about the message.

Participants learn to move conversations toward agreement with questions that focus on benefits to be gained when the objective is reached.

Participants learn to clearly and concisely restate the decisions that result from meeting with their managers and ensure that those decisions are mutually understood.

*Communicating Up and Memory Jogger Card™ are trademarks of Vital Learning.*

