

NCA's Training and Development Division's Best Practices for Communication Training and Consulting

Communication Best Practices: Competency, Accountability, and Transparency

The National Communication Association's (NCA) Training and Development Division has developed the following slate of areas to be considered for best practices. After an extensive and wide ranging multi-year effort involving thousands of possible topics and input from literature, government, practitioners, and scholars the twelve practices below were developed for use by communication scholars and practitioners in regard to communication training and development. The practices reflect a much broader framework for NCA's coaches, consultants, instructors, and trainers, of competency, accountability, and transparency.

Maintain Transparency to Clients and Trainees

1. Those involved in Training and Development professional activities should acknowledge a framework of best practices that provides structure for their training and consulting.
2. Trainers and consultants should have readily available standards to which their professional activities can be evaluated by participants. Language should include demonstrable benchmarks.
3. Trainers and consultants must abide by a documented code of ethics that is easily obtainable by clients and assessment groups.

Use Assessable Methods

4. Trainers and consultants must have identifiable deliverables that can be internally and externally assessed.
5. Trainers should be able to demonstrate expertise in training transfer. This is demonstrated by:
 - a. Acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses of transfer vehicles (e.g. lecture, role plays, simulations, social media etc.)
 - b. Indicating a reasonably expected level of transfer that includes amount and duration.

Demonstrate Technology Proficiency

6. Trainers and consultants must maintain proficiency in communication technologies used for delivering and executing deliverables.

Demonstrate Continued Professional Development

7. Trainers and consultants subject and performance competencies must be acquired and maintained through recognized routine professional development activities. These must be readily available to clients and trainees.

Develop and Maintain Organizational Expertise

8. Organizational consultants must have a working knowledge of organizational communication catalysts including but not limited to current thinking on:
 - a. Leadership
 - b. Management
 - c. Organizational Communication:
 - i. Strategic Planning and Development
 - ii. Organizational Learning
 - iii. Organizational Culture
9. Organizational consultants must have a working knowledge of employee catalysts including but not limited to current thinking on:
 - a. Career Development
 - b. Human Resources
 - c. Innovativeness
 - d. Selection and appraisal

Demonstrate Effective and Appropriate Instructional Design Competence

10. Trainers and consultants should recognize different learning styles and their corresponding instructional methods including but not limited to
 - a. Active/passive learning
 - b. Andragogy/pedagogy
 - c. Different kinds of learners and learning styles (e.g. visual, kinesthetic, auditory)
 - d. Generational learning differences
11. Trainers and consultants must be able to produce and design instruction documentation that indicates their ability to
 - a. Develop a training plan
 - b. Develop training goals and objectives
 - c. Use appropriate training methods and techniques
 - d. Use and apply training benchmarks
 - e. Effectively and appropriately assess training

Demonstrate Communication Proficiency

12. Trainers and consultants should be skilled in
 - a. Presentation techniques for a range of speaking contexts and experiences
 - b. Speaker credibility design and assessment
 - c. Interpersonal communication techniques and theories
 - d. Organizational culture
 - e. Group communication techniques and strategies
 - i. Group decision making
 - ii. Problem solving
 - iii. Groups' advantages and disadvantages