

The grapevine

Communicating in a world of change



video arts™

A Video Arts production
featuring John Cleese, Geraldine James, Peter
Capaldi, Andy Taylor, Paul Bigley and Mina Anwar.

The grapevine

Communicating in a world of change

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Titles in this series:

Absence minded: managing absenteeism

An inside job: meeting internal customer needs

Building the perfect team: Belbin's team role theory in action

Can you spare a moment?: counselling skills for managers

Demanding customers: customer care made perfect

Does the team work?: improving effectiveness through teamwork

First among equals: leading a team

How am I doing?: the performance review

How to lose customers without really trying: keeping the customer satisfied

I wasn't prepared for that: overcoming the fear of making presentations

I'd like a word with you: the discipline interview

If looks could kill: the power of behaviour

It's your choice: selection skills for managers

Meetings, bloody meetings: making meetings more productive

Messing up a Meeting, parts 1 & 2

More bloody meetings: the people side of meetings

Negotiating - tying the knot: a skill for life

No complaints?: complaints and the customer

On the receiving end: making call centres more effective

Performance matters: the importance of praise

Performance matters: the need for constructive criticism

Project management: leading a project team

Report writing: the art of writing a good report

Selecting the perfect team: utilising internal and external resources

Sell it to me! parts 1 & 2: essential skills for a salesperson

Straight talking: the art of assertiveness

Talking to the team: how to run a team meeting

Team spirit?: how to be an effective team member

Telephone behaviour: the rules of effective communication

The balance sheet barrier: the basics of business finance

The best of motives, parts 1 & 2: informing and involving

The dreaded appraisal: both sides of the appraisal interview

The grapevine: communicating in a world of change

The helping hand: coaching skills for managers

The paper chase: cutting back on paperwork

The unorganised manager, parts 1 & 2: damnation and salvation

The unorganised manager, part 3: divine intervention

The ultimate change show: managing change

The ultimate stress show: managing stress

Who sold you this, then?: effective after-sales service

You'll soon get the hang of it: the techniques of one-to-one training

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OHP-1-OHP-8 Presentation slides/OHPs*

Certificate*

*Copies of these resources are available on the enclosed computer disks to allow you to customise them to your specific requirements and to print the required number of copies from the master for the sole purpose of the training envisaged by the programme, and not for any commercial purpose.

Video-based training from Video Arts



Congratulations on choosing **The grapevine** from Video Arts to help develop the skills in your organisation.

Video Arts is recognised as the world leader in video-based training, with over 30 years' experience in staff development. With more than 250 video, DVD and e-learning/on-line programmes covering all the essential skills of business, you can remain confident that training with Video Arts is the most effective way to improve the skillset of the people within your organisation.



Gossip can be costly to the business, which is why people need to be kept informed.

Why train?

Train hard, fight easy - Marshal Zhukov

These days, it is difficult for organisations to become successful and stay that way. The pace of change is faster, competition is tougher, customers are more demanding, innovation is more prized, but harder to achieve.

Part of the response has been to create leaner, flatter, more flexible structures. But structures don't run organisations and create success, people do - intelligent people, energetic people, reliable people and, most of all, people with the right mix of up-to-date knowledge and skills.

That means people who are trained, not for a lifetime's work, not just once in a while, but as a central, continuing part of their working lives.

Why use video-based training?

Video is familiar. Television is how most people find out what is going on in the world. It is not surprising that this is a medium they are comfortable to learn from when they are being trained.

Video makes demonstration easy. We can show situations being handled badly. We can contrast that with how to handle them well.

Video is flexible. It can be the cornerstone of a course run for a group by a specialist trainer. It can quickly provide simple, clear lessons for a team whenever it is convenient for them. It can bring interest and enlightenment to a self-study programme.

Video injects realism. It lets us present those being trained with emotional, as well as rational, problems to solve. Ask a group *'how would you deal with an angry customer?'* and you will get a tidy, textbook answer. Use video to confront them with an angry customer and you will get a much more realistic reaction.

Video provides variety. Different people learn in different ways and none of us has an infinite attention span. Video provides us with a powerful means of injecting variety into our training.

Why use Video Arts' programmes?

Winston Churchill once said that he loved to learn, but hated being taught.

That is the secret of successful training: how to help people who want to learn. We do it by combining:

A storehouse of professional knowledge and expertise, developed over 25 years and drawing on some of the best minds in the business.

The highest possible production values, both in the videos we produce and in the support material that goes with them.

The magic ingredient - humour - which can make a delight of the dullest subject.

Introduction

The grapevine is a dramatised case study showing the importance of open communication within organisations.

For those employed by an organisation there is nothing worse than not knowing what is going on - especially in times of change. People both want and need to know what is happening. Otherwise, they will form their own conclusions and these are just as likely to be wrong as right.

The case study will be valuable for all managers and team leaders. It highlights how communication cannot simply be left to memos, emails, notice boards, house journals and videos, useful though all these may be for their own purposes. Face-to-face communication, good personal communication skills and a willingness to communicate are essential to get ideas accepted and jobs done.

All the links in the communication chain must be equally strong. If some managers communicate openly and others badly or not at all, this will only feed uncertainty and confusion.

Open communication also offers another benefit. Employees may be able to volunteer information, ideas and perspectives of problems which managers have not seen for themselves.

The grapevine features Alex, a Divisional Manager who regards 'communication' as a bit of a chore and so avoids doing it. He also fears that telling people the truth will do them more harm than good. As a result, he undermines the good work of his colleagues and helps to create disruptive rumours which have a negative impact on productivity.

In the case study, Alex's team jump to wrong conclusions because they are not told what is going on. But Alex learns from his mistakes, and comes to see the benefits of open communication.

Objectives

Those who work their way through **The grapevine** training programme will:

- recognise the importance of effective and open communications
- be sensitive to the dangers of bad communications
- identify strengths and weaknesses in communication within their own organisation
- learn some practical skills and techniques which can be put to work straight away

Using The grapevine

- **Dual use.** The programme can be used either as a conventional training course with a small group or for self study by individuals. The pack contains guidance and appropriate materials for each use
- **Resources on disk.** Most of the support materials, such as the display graphics (which can be used on computer screens, or as OHPs) and the workbooks are supplied on disk. This makes it easy for you to customise and allows you to print as many copies as you need for group or individual use

The target audience

The programme is designed for all managers and team leaders who have communication and team-briefing responsibilities.

You must decide whether the group should contain people at different levels in the organisation or consist entirely of peers. The advantage of a mixed group is that you will be able to address 'them and us' objections directly. However, in some organisations people are uneasy working with those at a different level.

Eight to twelve people is the ideal group size.

The course leader

You do not have to be a professional trainer to lead a group through the programme. Line managers will be able to deliver this course with confidence by using the materials and detailed guidance provided.

Further resources

Other titles available from Video Arts that will help you improve your team's communications skills include:

- **Talking to the team: team briefings** are an essential part of most managers' roles and team leaders must know how to talk to their teams in order to exercise their leadership. This programme shows how to run an effective team meeting
- **The best of motives - Part 1: nobody ever tells us; Part 2: nobody ever asks us** The titles of the two parts of this programme are testimony to two of the most common complaints in organisations. The programme explains how team leaders can improve motivation and increase productivity by informing and involving their teams
- **I wasn't prepared for that: overcoming the fear of making presentations** Panic is often the first reaction when we are first asked to make an important presentation. That is certainly the case for Rachel, played by Dawn French, in this programme on presentation skills. Fortunately Greg, played by Robert Lindsay, is on hand to show her how
- **The complete presenter: developing effective presentation skills** This complete training kit from Melrose is a flexible resource designed to turn anyone into an effective speaker. It contains five training units, two video programmes, a resource binder and a comprehensive trainer's guide
- **The communicator's pocketbook** This is one of the hugely successful Management pocketbook series
- **Effective communication** This is one of the Video Arts' Self-development workbook series

What the pack contains

The grapevine video

The grapevine features Geraldine James, Peter Capaldi and Andy Taylor. The video is set in a company which produces computer components. The company has grown and become successful on the back of a much larger computer company, which has now gone bankrupt - highly publicised in the press.

Losing the security blanket of this large customer could spell disaster. The challenge for the management is to respond positively and to embrace the inevitable change as an opportunity, not a threat.

Their plan is to pursue new and more diverse markets, taking advantage of the reputation they have built in the industry. But this means the workforce will need to change the ways in which it operates. The status quo is not an option.

Responding to market changes will mean downsizing. But there should be no immediate job losses. The company should be able to adjust to the smaller size required by not replacing people as they leave.

The Chief Executive and other members of the executive team see this as an exciting time for the business, with serious potential for even more growth than in the past. But some are better than others at communicating the facts, the plans and the excitement of their potential to their teams.

The video shows how Alex, the Divisional Manager in charge of production, at first gets it all wrong – with near-disastrous consequences. But, with prompting from one of his team leaders and his Chief Executive, Alex learns the importance of putting a high priority on effective communication with all members of the organisation.

Course leader's guide

- An outline of a half-day programme
- How to prepare the programme
- A detailed session plan. This tells the course leader precisely what to do and which resources to use in each session of the programme

Group training workbook

This workbook allows those taking part in a group training course to record the conclusions they reach during the various sessions and the actions they propose to take as a result of the course. The workbook is supplied on computer disk.

It also contains a copy of the course objectives and programme and a set of notes which summarise the main points of **The grapevine**.

Self-study workbook

This workbook, which is supplied on computer disk, contains detailed instructions which enable individuals to work systematically through the programme. Users are prompted to record their answers to questions about what they have seen, and to produce an Action plan.

The workbook also contains a set of notes which summarise the main points from **The grapevine**.

Links to NVQs

Both workbooks contain a checklist of material which those who have taken part in the programme should collect, such as examples of communications briefs on specific projects, to form a portfolio of evidence which they can use to support a claim for competence in elements of NVQs.

Presentation 'slides'/OHPs

These are master copies supplied in Microsoft® PowerPoint® on computer disk, for printing on to acetate or for use as a computer-driven 'slide' show.

Certificate

One of the disks also contain a blank certificate, which users can customise and issue to those who have completed the course based on **The grapevine**.

Computer disks

As explained above, the computer disks contain copies of:

- Group training workbook (Microsoft® Word®)
- Self-study workbook (Microsoft® Word®)
- Presentation 'slides'/OHPs (Microsoft® PowerPoint®)
- Certificate (Microsoft Word)

(Microsoft®, Word® and PowerPoint® are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.)

Course leader's guide

Course programme

How to prepare the programme

Session 1 Introduction and objectives

Session 2 Discussion: my worst-ever manager

Session 3 Exercise: Project Eureka

Session 4 **The grapevine** - the video

Session 5 Our grapevine

Session 6 How we communicate

Session 7 Our communication skills

Session 8 Action plan



Course programme

This is a suggested programme for a half-day course based on *The grapevine*.

You may choose to incorporate additional sessions to cover key points specific to your organisation, or just take elements of the course and run a series of short sessions covering each aspect of *The grapevine* individually.

If you would like help in facilitating this course, or in adapting it to your specific requirements, call Video Arts Training Services. An experienced training consultant can advise you or, for an agreed fee, design and run a course for you.

Video Arts Training Services can be contacted at:
Tel: 020 7400 4800
email: info@videoarts.co.uk

The programme on the next page is an outline of the course.

Each session is covered in detail later in the guide.



The ability to give a good brief is an underestimated skill.

Session no.	Session content	Approx. timing
Session 1	Introduction and objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and housekeeping • Objectives • Course programme 	<i>15 mins</i>
Session 2	Discussion: my worst-ever manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Results 	<i>15 mins</i>
Session 3	Exercise: Project Eureka <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group exercises • Report back • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 4	The grapevine - the video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Discussion 	<i>60 mins</i>
Break		<i>15 mins</i>
Session 5	Our grapevine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 6	How we communicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 7	Our communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 8	Action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan • Course summary 	<i>15 mins</i>
Total:		<i>4 hours (including break)</i>