

# Amrita School of Business

Ettimadai, Coimbatore

## Course: The Art of Corporate & Marketing Communications

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### Course Objective:

The primary purpose of a firm/ entity is to bring to the market products or services with a view to make a profit. In doing so, it engages with multiple stakeholders internal and external to the organization such as customers, shareholders, employees, Government and the larger society. Ongoing communications with its stakeholders is of paramount importance to garner support for its existence and managements globally devote a significant proportion of their attention towards communications as a center-stage activity.

Communications being a two-way street needs to be crafted with great diligence. It has a science of transmission (process) and as well as the art of bringing it to life as an interesting story (content and presentation). While the science aspect informs one about the knowledge of things, the art involves expressing / sharing the knowledge in a format which is palatable to the select audience. It is often said that beautiful creations fructify to life when the science and art blends itself in an integrative manner. Further, in contrast to the science facet, which by nature is objective, the art facet is subjective and aptly described as beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder.

Despite its importance in the industry and within the marketing function, the required skills of effective workplace communication are not comprehensively covered in the B-School curriculum leaving the newly hired business managers struggling to adapt to the demands of the industry. In this course, the focus will be on nurturing the art of effective communications through inputs on contemporary styles and etiquettes preferred by organizations globally. This course is about adopting a wide canvas and unleashing your creative juices, where no ideas are wrong and the only inhibiting factor is one's motivation levels. Throughout this course, each one of you would be framing and re-framing, crafting and re-crafting, writing and re-writing till you get the audience to like them!

This elective program aims at accelerating the skill acquisition process and the pedagogy would be an interesting mix of in-class sessions, workshops and hands-on practice sessions. Highly recommended for all management graduates (a majority of your working life will be spent on communicating) especially from the marketing stream. **In the short run, it is an effective preparation for placements.** 😊

### Learning Objectives:

This course aims to introduce the art of business centric communications for marketing students. The course involves understanding the nuances of different types of communications as well as aid acquisition of key communication skills for a career post-MBA. The course will directly help students to hone their creative instincts and express them effectively to make an impact while communicating.

## **Course Outline ( 1 session = 1 hr 15 mins)**

- **Session 1, 2 & 3 – Overview of Communication Landscape (In class session)**
  - a. Introductions, agenda setting and expectations
  - b. Introduction to firm related communications as a discipline within Management
  - c. Overview of various type of communications
    - i. Corporate communications
    - ii. Marketing communications
    - iii. Internal Marketing & Communications
    - iv. Public Relations
    - v. Advertising
  - d. Channels of communications - Oral, written, visual & enactments
  - e. Internal vs external communications
  - f. Impersonal to personal communications : Importance of the actor/ presenter ( management actors) during such performances
  - g. Communication artefacts : appropriateness of use
    - i. Letters & e-mails, newsletters, press releases, management reports, thought leadership, power-point slide decks, posters, promotional videos, advertising campaigns, product/ service launches, conferences, town-halls, community out-reach events, podcasts etc.
  - h. Overview of the process of creating communication artefacts
  - i. Introduction to storytelling: Pyramid principle and MECE
- **Session 4, 5 & 6 - Story telling as an art ( workshop mode – External facilitator)**
  - a. The importance of storytelling/ Narratives
  - b. What makes a good story
  - c. Story telling skills : How to tell a story across various mediums / channels
  - d. Introducing concepts with stories
  - e. Synergetic deployment of audio/ visual and written mediums
  - f. Graded hands on exercise/ role play or Quiz **(GRADED)**
- **Session 7,8 & 9 – Oral communication in business domain**
  - a. Etiquettes of effective oral communication at workplaces – with peers, leaders and customers
  - b. Hands-on exercises (using role plays) to effortlessly communicate **(GRADED)**
- **Session 10, 11 & 12 – Visual communication in business domain**
  - a. Power point as an important tool for effective business communications
  - b. Etiquettes of using power point as a tool – story boarding, structuring and visual appeal
  - c. Presentation hard and soft skills
  - d. Hands-on exercises and take home exercise with feedback
- **Session 13, 14 & 15 – Written communications in business domain**
  - a. Sentence/ Paragraph construction
  - b. Etiquettes of effective written communication at workplaces – Letter/ Mails, Min-of Meetings, reports
  - c. Hands-on practice sessions on written communication artefacts ( resume writing with a cover letter)
  - d. Take home exercise with feedback
- **Session 16, 17 & 18 - Strategic Internal communications - ( Workshop Mode – External facilitator)**
  - a. Importance of internal communications – The WHAT and WHEN?
  - b. The elevator pitches

- c. Storyboarding / Narrative building
  - d. The propagation of key messages; timing and synchronisation
  - e. Choice of impersonal and personal modes of communications in strategic comms
- **Session 19, 20 & 21 – External Communications (Workshop Mode - External facilitator)**
    - a. Importance of external communications – The WHAT and WHEN?
    - b. Storyboarding / Narrative building for impactful advertisements and promotions
    - c. The choice of communication mediums, channel and agency
    - d. How to evaluate performance of different communications deployed
  - **Session 22, 23 & 24 – Student presentations (GRADED)**
    - a. Each student to distribute resume along with a cover note and introduce self to a panel. This will be followed by power point presentations on a topic of interest.
    - b. Feedbacks by mentors
  - **Session 25 – Wrap Up**
    - a. Summary of learned concepts

**Course Grading (out of 100 points):**

- (1) Assignment 1 – Story telling module (20/100)
- (2) Assignment 2 – Power point and presentation (30/100)
- (3) Assignment 3 – Written report submission (20/100)
- (4) **End Term** – Written exam (30/100)

**Recommended Readings**

1. “The Pyramid Principle: Logic in Writing and Thinking” by **Barbara Minto (2008)**
2. “Personal Branding, Storytelling and Beyond” by **Dr. Amit Nagpal & Dr. Prakash Hindustani (2016)**
3. “The Story Engine: An entrepreneur's guide to content strategy and brand storytelling without spending all day writing” by **Kyle Gray (2017)**

**Requests to PGP:** Given its hands-on pedagogical style, have the following requests for the course

- Time table be scheduled as a lump of 3 contiguous sessions in a week, preferable on Friday or Saturday.
- At least 1 copy of the above three books be purchased and photocopies distributed to students.
- Need a spacious hall ( room) for conducting workshops ( e.g : Yoga room on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)