Purpose 5: Managing Information and Communications
OVERVIEW
Having been introduced to the basics of business continuity, emergency management, homeland security, cyber security, and psychology of disaster in previous Purposes, you are now directed toward the fine art of disaster communications. Social Media is transforming disaster communications in tremendously positive and negative ways. Information management and political concerns make this challenging area of emergency management ripe for intense discussions and case study applications.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION
The case study method will be employed in this fifth Constructive Action. This particular Constructive Action will focus on the recurrent tragedy of communications management errors, as well as the human toll that poor information management can cause during an emergency. In this course, students will integrate their learning experience from the respective dimensions of this Purpose. Students in Semester 5 will receive strong support for the CA through their coursework in Public Speaking and the focus on the Public Information Officer, Risk Assessment and Analysis as it applies to communications regarding risk, and the ARC/GIS course, using enhanced technologies to improve information applications. Students are expected to produce a Constructive Action document, which demonstrates their mastery of the Purpose.

DIMENSIONS
In the Values and Ethics Dimension, students will study public speaking. Public speaking is an essential skill of leadership. Students are introduced to the tradition of public speaking and persuasion techniques. Through readings and other activities, students improve public speaking and critical thinking skills. This course emphasizes analysis, reasoning, organization, and presentation of evidence.

In the Self and Others Dimension, students will study the nature of management and the interpersonal and analytical skills managers need to be successful. Students will examine the manager's role with emphasis on planning, organizing, leading, and controlling in a variety of organizations including profit and not-for-profit organizations. Students will examine management theories on leadership, motivation, and communication and how these can be applied to manager’s every day role.

The Systems Dimension is a basic overview of disaster mitigation and preparedness, which focuses on strategies to minimize the consequences of disasters. Some examples of disasters include hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, power outages and terrorist attacks. By understanding the importance of mitigation and preparedness within the cycle of emergency management, the student will obtain a better understanding of its role in the field. Study of FEMA’s four step mitigation strategy: assessment of community support, assessment of risks by a community planning team, identifying mitigation options, and public education and awareness.
The Skills Dimension: This course will study the phenomenon of Digital Humanitarianism. Who exactly are these Digital Humanitarians? They’re you, me, all of us. Digital Humanitarians are volunteers and professionals from the world over and from all walks of life. What do they share in common? The desire to make a difference, and they do by rapidly mobilizing online in collaboration with international humanitarian organizations. In virtually real-time, they make sense of vast volumes of social media, SMS and imagery captured from satellites and UAVs to support relief efforts worldwide. How? They craft and leverage ingenious crowdsourcing solutions with trail-blazing insights from artificial intelligence. Students in this course will become Digital Humanitarians and either study a past crowd-sourced event or work a current disaster in real time.
WORKING OUTLINE: CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION DOCUMENTATION

Overview
Producing a written documentation of your Constructive Action is a separate endeavor from carrying out the Constructive Action itself. The process of Constructive Action is described in the earlier sections: "Constructive Action: An Overview" and "Purpose." This section provides you with specific guidelines for the documentation of your efforts. This documentation covers:

1. Presentation of the Abstract
2. Exploratory Phase
3. Planning Phase
4. Background Research
5. Implementation Phase
6. Final Assessment Phase
7. Formatting Your Constructive Action Document

1. Presentation of the Abstract
Although this section appears first; it is completed at the END of your Constructive Action. It includes a brief overview of the Purpose, your own objectives and why chosen, and what you learned and accomplished.

The Final Abstract (1 page, typed, single-spaced) is composed of three parts:

- Part I - Purpose: What is the Constructive Action and how does it relate to the Purpose of this Semester? Background: What was the need for the Constructive Action?
- Part II - Objectives and Methodology: What is your long-term goal? What were the objectives? What were the methods and strategies employed?
- Part III - Conclusions: Assessment of the outcomes. What will be the follow-up?*

*Begin with a topic statement: This statement will eventually become the first paragraph of your abstract. Formulate or state your short-term goal.

2. Statement of short and long-term goals
   A. Your short-term goal is what you hope to achieve by the end of the semester.
   B. Long Term Goal – State the Length of Time.

3. Exploratory Phase
The background for much of this part comes from:

- your own experience and knowledge;
- material covered in Dimension seminars;
- job-related sources;
- readings and discussions in Purpose class.

After you have written your topic statement, proceed to your Work Setting, Situation and Needs Analyses.
A. **Analysis of Work setting as it relates to this specific Purpose Semester**
   An analysis of the work setting takes these factors into account:
   1. design of the work area;
   2. how design promotes or impedes communications, work flow, and morale;
   3. how design reflects promotes or impedes productivity.

B. **Analysis of the Situation or Problem Description**
   An analysis of the situation takes these factors into account:
   
   **Part I:**
   1. How different macro environments affect your venture: economic, legal, or socio-cultural
   2. a description of the industry in which your company operates or venture takes place
   3. an overview of your company, its products, services, structure, philosophy, and goals;
   
   **Part II:**
   4. a description of your department/function;
   5. your formal job description and role in venture at hand.
   
   **Part III:**
   6. An extensive description of the problem or circumstances; use examples and illustrations which have motivated this undertaking.

   The basic questions to be answered by A and B, then, are:
   - What is the environment in which you work? What is its physical setting? What are its professional and psychological conditions?
   - How does your environment and/or your position in it support or limit your purpose or opportunity to act and to develop professionally?
   - What values are communicated through non-verbal channels (e.g. use of space, size and placement of objects, desks, etc.)?

   Setting and situation provide the relevant ground-rules and opportunities for your plan, and the factors which may constrain your actions (i.e. limiting factors or variables).

C. **Need or Opportunity: Solution Statement**
   This section contains the rationale and analysis of a solution to be undertaken as related to the Purpose to be achieved.
   This need also should apply to your own professional development. Resolving the need should benefit yourself and significant others and contribute to productivity on the job.
   The Need, Opportunity or Solution Analysis should include (but need not be limited to):
   1. description of the solution you will be undertaking;
   2. a rationale for why this solution at this time.
   3. a narrative description of objectives and strategies to be undertaken.
4. Planning Phase

A. The Plan of Action consists of a four section chart:
   1. the goal(s) of the Constructive Action (short term - by the end of this term; long term - the next goal to follow from the short term goal);
   2. proposed objectives (mini-goals);
   3. strategies (how to get there);
   4. evaluation criteria (how will you know you got there).

Goals
- Your goals should be appropriate to the Purpose performance area.
- The Short Term Goal: what you hope to have achieved by the end of the Semester.
- The Long Term Goal: the goal to follow from your short-term goal. Set a realistic time frame as part of your long term goal statement.

OBJECTIVES
In this section, you write the specific, short-term objectives which you hope to accomplish during this Semester. These objectives should be as specific as possible in terms of obviously measurable changes.

The objectives should be related to:
- the Purpose to be achieved,
- the analysis of the needs and setting in which you currently work, and
- the support of your long-term development.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS
These are concrete, real life actions you will take to achieve each individual objective:

1. List each action you will take. There should be at least one strategy for each objective. These actions should be as concrete and practical as possible. You may also suggest alternative strategies or multiple strategies for any one objective.
2. Analyze resources and constraints relevant to the accomplishment of each strategy. Decide whether you want to include organizational or external resources. Do you want to include your self-assessment of skills and abilities? Areas for development? Other?
3. After you are at your midpoint assessment phase, ask yourself if you want to change any strategies and implement new ones.

EVALUATION PLAN
Describe the criteria or benchmarks to be used to monitor progress toward achieving goals and objectives during the Semester; that is, how exactly you will know a) whether or not your strategies have succeeded and b) if these strategies will help you meet your objectives. Also describe the methods to be used for determining whether these criteria have been met.

There should be at least one measure for each objective and strategy. Measures should be both quantitative and qualitative. Evaluation criteria are part of the plan of action and are set out before you begin to implement your plan. They may be altered if the reality of a critical incident so demands. Assessment of learning (Part III) is done after implementation.
5. Background Research - [In this semester you must do a major research paper. See Purpose Overview]

Here is your opportunity to explicitly demonstrate the theoretical or conceptual underpinnings of your Constructive Action—the ways in which you have drawn upon theoretical sources and corroborative references.

In applying class content to the Constructive Action process, you will have to sift and filter facts, data, theories, and hypotheses. Decide which sources, illustrations or pieces of evidence are useful towards the conceptualization, implementation and assessment of your specific Constructive Action.

You may choose to write a background essay or a review of the literature on a selected topic or create an annotated bibliography of sources consulted. Targeted sources should be referenced in your document to help you:

- clarify terminology and theories,
- suggest problem solving approaches, and
- enhance analysis of learning.

You must provide footnotes/endnotes and bibliographies for each research paper or project submitted.

6. Implementation Phase

In this section of the document you will record the actual step-by-step implementing of your Constructive Action.

Recording Critical Incidents

In recording critical incidents, you are asked to describe specific occurrences or interactions based on the implementation of strategies which pertain to your Constructive Action. This written "log" or summary tells: what happened, how you dealt with it, and how you felt and reacted. You can analyze the challenges you encountered, and whether or not you have succeeded. A critical incident report briefly details the following information:

a. When and where did it happen?

b. What happened? (What did you see and hear?)

c. What did you say? Do?

d. Who else was involved? How did they affect the way the situation went or how you responded?

e. How did you feel? (Be specific - don't just say "good" or "bad").

f. How did it turn out? Why?

When you describe what happened, be sure to give specific behaviors. Include non-verbal action(s) as well as quotations from you and any other person(s) involved. Provide sufficient information so that another reader has a clear picture of the situation or so that the situation can be role-played. You must give careful thought to what information is relevant. Select and focus on what is significant. Each specific situation is different, so no absolute rules can be given.

When you reflect on your personal analysis of the incident, give your inferences, interpretations, feelings, and assumptions about the interaction. You must then state what strategic decision you made to move the interaction along while trying to achieve your purpose.
For your Constructive Action, monitor those incidents, which involve the issues, and/or relationships which are the focus of the Constructive Action. In addition, each incident should illustrate either progress or lack of progress toward the goal(s) you are working to achieve. Logging or written monitoring is the process by which you record the development of your Constructive Action. It cannot be rushed in the last few weeks; it must be developed over the course of the semester. The material in the recordings, when appropriately detailed, becomes a major part of your analysis. It demonstrates how well you planned and implemented your Constructive Action, and how well you were able to integrate academic learning into "live" situations.

A chart for recording critical incidents is included at the end of this section.

7. Final Assessment Phase

The final phase of the Constructive Action process provides the last major section of the written report. That is, you have researched and planned your goals and objectives, your strategies and evaluation criteria (all in relation to your needs and your current position on the job) and you have spent several weeks acting on your plans (i.e., implementing them).

In the final weeks of the Semester, then, you reflect and assess what has happened, what worked and what didn't work and why, what you learned from your class readings and actions, and their applicability to the Constructive Action.

A. Assessment of Goals
   1. Did you achieve your short-term goal?
   2. Was your goal realistic? Explain.
   3. Did you reach your objectives? How do you know?
   4. Which objectives were redefined, if any. Explain why?

B. Assessment of Strategies
   1. Which strategies worked? Why? Cite references to specific materials to support your discussion.
   2. Which strategies did not work? If any, why not? Cite references to specific materials to support your discussion.
   3. Would you use these strategies again in similar situations?

C. Assessment of Overall Learning
   1. Explain what you learned from this experience. What do you know that you did not know before?
   2. In what ways did the Dimension classes and their accompanying readings help you with you to achieve your goals? In what ways were they not helpful?

D. Conclusion
   Write a statement of your plans for further action.
8. Formatting Your Constructive Action Document

- General Format/Organization - Constructive Action Document
- Typed, double-spaced
- Margins: 1 - 1 1/2 inches all around
- Parts of the Document
- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Abstract Short and Long-term Goals
- Exploration Phase
  1. Setting Analysis
  2. Situational Analysis
  3. Need/Oppportunity/Solution Analysis
- Plan of Action
  1. Plan of Action Chart
- Background Research
- Research Essays including footnotes/endnotes, and bibliography for each essay
- Implementation
- Critical Logs
  Minimum 5 logs [NOTE: each log must be accompanied by an abilities assessment page and a “Next Steps I Will” section] with analysis by Dimension and Abilities
- Final Assessment
- Appendices

**Appendices and Other Supporting Documentation**
These may include memos, letters, and/or reports relevant to the Constructive Action, as well as feedback from faculty, supervisor, peers, other company constituents, and personal assessment.

* At the discretion of the Purpose Instructor, this section may be placed before the plan of action or incorporated into other sections. Background research and evidence of theoretical ground work must appear as part of the documentation.
Plan of Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Purpose:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Prepared:</td>
<td>Date revised:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LONG-TERM GOAL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION GOAL</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>EVALUATION PLAN</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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### CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CA GOALS:</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES:</th>
<th>STRATEGIES:</th>
<th>EVALUATION PLAN:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- appropriate to Purpose of the semester</td>
<td>- are observable;</td>
<td>- define resources to be used, how and by whom;</td>
<td>- Identifies evaluation of each strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- addresses Needs Analysis;</td>
<td>- are realistic within given time frame;</td>
<td>- describe how constraints will be handled;</td>
<td>- identifies method;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- represents a logical step toward long-range goal;</td>
<td>- Are challenging</td>
<td>- Are appropriate to Needs Analysis, long- and short-range goals</td>
<td>- Is appropriate to Needs Analysis, long and short-range goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Are challenging, doable.</td>
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**Constructive Action: Record of Critical Incident**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place:</td>
<td>Persons Involved:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy Implemented:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content - text</th>
<th>Interpretation-subtext</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On this side, record your thoughts, feelings inferences, strategies, assumptions, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was really nervous. My tone of voice was apologetic, but I asked for help anyway.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made me angry at being paid attention to; but later I was making him nervous because he doesn't know how to deal with the change I'm proposing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis by Dimension®

Purpose:

Values:

Self & Others:

Systems:

Skills:
Assessment/Summary of New Understanding

What do you know now that you would not have known if this incident had not taken place?

Indicate whether you thought the situation went well or badly. Did it help you reach your goal or objective? Why or why not? (It went well because.../It would have gone better if...)

Next Steps:

I will:

Others (co-workers, supervisor, et al) will: