



+ VMG Associates +

**Personal Skills Development
Menu of Opportunities**

Menu of Opportunities

Within this brochure you will find examples of the type of products we can offer. The content is by no means prescriptive we prefer to tailor events to suit individual and organisational needs. Our courses are suitable for individuals from any level within an organisation. We can also deliver training on a one to one basis.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss your own specific training needs. Alternatively if you are unsure of exactly what your needs are we would be happy to conduct a training needs analysis for you.

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Module PS01

Assertiveness

This programme consists of a two day workshop, preceded by a short pre-workshop assignment.

It includes individual work, discussions, group work and practice sessions. You will have the opportunity to practise on real life situations that happen in your job, in a safe environment, enabling you to become more adept at handling these effectively.

The majority of the time within the workshop will be dedicated to skills practice.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Improve your personal confidence
- Identify the characteristics of assertive, aggressive and passive behaviour
- Communicate effectively by the practical use of different levels of assertive behaviour
- Cope with aggressive or passive behaviour in others
- Improve effectiveness at work by implementing techniques to behave more assertively.

Duration

1 day

Module PS02

Committee Secretary

This programme consists of a pre-workshop assignment followed by a one day workshop. The assignment provides a comprehensive overview of the role of a committee secretary and includes checklists of key points to be dealt with. You will be asked to produce copies of minutes of meetings that you, or your managers, have attended. In addition you will explore how you currently manage the role of minute secretary or, if you have not yet carried out this role, what challenges you expect to face and what concerns you wish to address.

Almost the whole of the workshop, which will follow the structure of a typical meeting, will require you (working with a partner) to record short sections of the meeting and then produce a minute of that section of the meeting. These minutes will be reviewed by other learners and the facilitator.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Prepare an agenda
- Understand the responsibilities of a committee secretary before, during and after a meeting
- Identify the main problems you are likely to be faced with when taking minutes and means of overcoming these
- Use different options for recording the discussions, decisions and actions covered at the meeting
- Taking notes and produce minutes
- Produce an action plan to make specific improvements to your effectiveness as a committee secretary.

Duration

1 day

Module PS03 Communication Skills

This programme consists of a one day workshop, preceded by a pre workshop assignment. It will address the fundamental communication skills that underpin a number of other communication programmes. The workshop will provide you with opportunities to enhance your self awareness and increase your ability to communicate effectively with others.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the elements of good communication
- Why communication fails
- Improve your communication skills
- Listen and question effectively
- Build rapport with others
- Identify your own and others' Personal Style and how this impacts on communication

Duration

1 day

Module PS04

Dealing with Difficult Telephone calls

This programme consists of a pre-programme assignment followed by a one day workshop.

The programme aims to provide you with the skills to handle difficult and abusive calls appropriately. It will provide you with strategies to handle calls, enabling you to develop your own personal “toolkit”. There will be opportunities throughout the event to share your personal experiences in handling difficult calls and this will be core to the learning that you and others experience at the event.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand what equates to abusive phone calls
- Identify specific examples from practical experience
- Understand how personal feelings and issues can effect responses
- Describe ‘best practice’ in dealing with behaviours and issues
- Use strategies to address phone rage and avoid “taking it personally”
- Create a personal “tool box” for handling problem calls with an appropriate response under pressure
- Use appropriate skills to bring calls to a successful conclusion.

Duration

1 day

Module PS05

Effective Meetings

So much of working life is spent in meetings. How often have we all attended meetings and wondered why we are there and what we are going to get out of it. This programme focuses on the role of the chair and the attendees and how they can assist with the smooth running of meetings. It involves a two hour Pre work assignment , plus a one day Masterclass, the majority of which will be devoted to practicing conducting meetings. You will have the opportunity to chair a meeting, and participate in up to four other meetings. Feedback will be given on all roles.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Clarify the key reasons for attending a meeting to ensure it is a worthwhile use of attendees' time
- Prepare for and chair a meeting effectively, including handling different situations and people
- Participate effectively in meetings
- Demonstrate how to develop creative ideas in a meeting
- Take actions that are necessary to follow up a meeting ensuring agreed actions are done or carried forward and monitored until they are done.

Duration

1 day

Module PS06

Facilitation Skills

This programme is particularly useful for those who will use the skills of facilitation in one of more of the following areas:

- Training
- Workshops
- Rollouts of projects/work plans
- Team Events
- Facilitating Group Event
- Action learning groups
- Team Training
- Team Leader
- Team meetings
- 1 to 1 meetings

As the range is so varied, the programme has been broken down into 3 modules and enables you to identify and practice on the type of facilitation that is appropriate to your role.



Module PS06

Module 1

Facilitation Fundamentals

This module consists of a one day workshop, preceded by a pre workshop assignment. It covers what facilitation is, the role of the facilitator, how people learn, the practicalities of facilitation, working with groups, how groups evolve and group training sessions. A three-stage facilitation process of:

- Listening to, and observing, others at the same time listening to yourself
- Interpreting the signals, comments, answers and reactions of others
- When to intervene.

is used within the module.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the role and responsibilities of a facilitator
- Use listening and questioning techniques effectively in a group situation
- Plan for a facilitated discussion
- Understand how groups evolve, and how the facilitator should best manage each stage
- Improve your skills in leading a group training discussion

Duration

1 day

Module PS06

Module 2

Tools & Techniques

This second module has a pre-workshop assignment covering facilitation tools and techniques, including techniques for:

- Gaining participation
- Gathering creative ideas
- Prioritising ideas and making decisions.

You will select two tools to incorporate into a practice session for the one day workshop.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the different levels of intervention
- Gain an understanding of group dynamics and the facilitator's role at each stage
- Select different tools and techniques appropriate to the group stage of development
- Facilitate a discussion using the skills and techniques identified.

Duration

1 day



Module PS06

Module 3 Facilitation Challenge

This module is for people with facilitation experience. It provides insight into areas such as:

- Facilitation behaviour
- The personal style of individuals and the impact on a group or the facilitator
- Handling different types of people
- People and issue challenges
- The use of language and behaviour to influence.

It has a pre-workshop assignment covering facilitator behaviour, style, and language. You will select a challenge issue to incorporate in a practice session and bring to the one day workshop for practice and feedback.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Communicate better with other people by adapting your style to theirs
- Make use of powerful language and behaviour patterns when facilitating a discussion.

Duration

1 day



Module PS07

Influencing Skills

This programme gives people an understanding of the dynamics of influencing, and provides the opportunity to practise a variety of tools and techniques. It consists of a pre-work assignment followed by a two day workshop. Within the workshop professional role players are used for the practice sessions to ensure they are both challenging and realistic.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the different behaviours that affect an influencing situation
- Build rapport in an influencing situation
- Adapt your influencing style to meet the needs of the other person(s)
- Identify a range of approaches to use when influencing others in potentially challenging circumstances
- Manage potentially challenging circumstances, in a confident, proactive and professional manner.

Duration

2 days

Module PS08

Building & Maintaining Business Networks

Building and maintaining business networks is an essential skill in managing stakeholders, developing a business and continually improving performance. This programme consists of a one day workshop, which addresses areas such as:

- What is Business Networking?
- Why bother networking?
- Politically Correct Networking
- Assessing your network
- How to work a room
- Maintaining and sharing your network

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand what networking is and how it applies in your current role
- Appreciate the benefits and pitfalls of networking
- Manage the politics and proprieties of networking
- Plan to proactively improve your network
- Understand the roles of diversity, equality and support in securing future working relationships
- Manage, maintain and share networks
- Conduct a networking conversation.

Duration

1 day

Module PS09

Negotiation Skills

This programme complements other products on Communications, Influencing and Assertiveness. Negotiation skills are a useful asset for everyone especially:

- Managers
- Stakeholders
- Contract Managers
- Facilities Managers.

The programme consists of a pre work assignment of three hours plus a one day workshop involving discussions, group work, and numerous practice sessions in small groups.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand a range of approaches to negotiation, and identify your current style
- Prepare for a negotiation
- Include all parties in the process of generating options, before proceeding to agreement
- Achieve a 'win-win' negotiation
- Use a range of strategies to overcome 'dirty tricks'.

Duration

1 day

Module PS10

Personal Impact

This programme will help you increase your personal impact in everyday communications. A key aspect is developing an understanding of Emotional Intelligence and how it may affect you and the people around you. Emotional Intelligence is not about being emotional but rather about being smart with our emotions. One of the strongest indicators of successful people is a high level of Emotional Intelligence and research suggests that the most successful leaders are those, not necessarily with high levels of IQ but specifically 'EQ', which is related to Emotional Intelligence.

During the programme participants are given the opportunity to discuss and practice new skills with the support of a professional trainer who will signpost them in the direction of an increased level of EI.

The programme commences with a pre workshop assignment followed by a two day workshop with the option of a half day consultancy follow up. The pre workshop assignment familiarises participants with Emotional Intelligence and Transactional Analysis theory. An Individual Effectiveness Questionnaire is also completed as prior to the workshop. The content of the workshop will include some theory, in-depth discussion and skills practices with a focus on self reflection.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand how Emotional Intelligence impacts on working relationships
- Describe Emotional Intelligence
- Interact effectively with others
- Manage the expectations and perceptions of others
- Adapt to difficult situations
- Understand how transactional analysis can increase self awareness
- Identify personal development needs

Duration

2 days

Module PS11

Personal Organisation

This programme is useful for everyone no matter what your organisational role. Everyone has to deal with conflicting demands and this programme is designed to help you reduce stress in yourself and others and gain work life balance no matter what the demands.

The programme consists of a one day workshop preceded by a pre work assignment. Within the assignment you will keep a log of how you spend your time for a typical week before attending the workshop. This will enable you to spot real time stealers and demands and so plan to make real improvements to your use of time.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand what a good life mix and balance means
- Adopt habits to improve life balance
- Understand how you currently spend your time
- Plan & prioritise your time effectively on a daily, weekly and monthly basis
- Manage paperwork and electronic correspondence effectively
- Say no to work that will not fulfil personal or organisational objectives, and to manage deadlines
- Improve your life work balance and use of time.

Duration

1 day

Module PS12

Powerful Publications

This programme builds on the foundations of identifying writing objectives, planning main points, considering your audience, ensuring the words, sentences and paragraphs are effective, which is covered in the *Writing with Your Audience in Mind*, programme. The Powerful Publications programme consists of a pre-programme assignment followed by a one day workshop and covers the following:

- The process of publication, the potential pitfalls and common problems
- The importance of research for audience data, content, structure and inspiration
- House Style
- Copyright - avoiding infringement
- Diversity - identifying ways of ensuring the publication is accessible and useable for the audience
- Printing - the options and the costs.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the key stages for a publication project and be aware of the potential pitfalls at each stage
- Conduct research which is beneficial in terms of content, audience data, structure and inspiration.
- Know where support is available for publication design, content, production and distribution
- Understand the process of publication and the common problems encountered by editors and proof readers
- Understand the importance of copyright law and the common areas of infringement
- Use different options for printing, taking account of cost
- Ensure your communication is accessible and appropriate for the potential audience

Duration

1 day

Module PS13

Presentation Skills

The ability to present information in an effective and confident way is a crucially important skill, no matter what position an individual holds within an organisation. This programme incorporates the knowledge elements of presentation skills into a four hour pre workshop assignment, followed by a half day workshop to develop skills. It provides you with the opportunity to build and polish a business presentation and so feel confident in your ability to deliver it effectively. You will attend the workshop element with just two other colleagues and the entire time will be dedicated to rehearsing presentations and getting feedback on performance.

(NB: A separate programme is available for those who make presentations to large and often challenging groups)

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Plan and develop a powerful, well structured, business presentation
- Make use of appropriate visual support
- Deliver your presentation with impact and confidence
- Answer questions confidently when presenting.

Duration

½ day

Module PS14

Presenting to Large Audiences

This programme builds on the skills developed through the Presentation Skills programme, or those you may have acquired elsewhere. It involves a substantial six hour pre workshop assignment, followed by a one day skills practice workshop. The key issues the programme will address include:

- Dealing with the unexpected
- Managing hostile questions and controlling your emotional state
- Presenting through interpreters, to an audience for whom English is not the first language
- Presenting on topics on which you aren't the 'expert'
- Managing the politics.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Maintain a positive emotional state throughout your presentation
- Prepare yourself mentally and emotionally to present to a large audience
- Make a personal impact on the audience
- 'Read' and control the emotional state of your audience
- Make effective use of platform skills
- Prepare effective visual support and manage audio visual equipment
- Deal with the unexpected and manage hostile questions
- Manage the political impact of the message, questions and coffee time small talk

Duration

1 day

Module PS15

Problem Solving & Decision Making

Duration

The ability to foresee and forestall potential problems, to identify existing ones before they escalate, and to tackle them at whatever stage of development, is a crucially important skill for staff at all levels.

This programme combines the knowledge elements of problem solving & decision making with a pre workshop assignment, followed by a one day Masterclass to develop skills. The majority of the Masterclass is experiential and uses an in-depth coaching approach to share knowledge and expertise. It will provide insight in to how people solve problems and how they interact with other people during the process. This understanding can lead to greater tolerance of the differences and the benefits they bring when seeking to solve problems.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the difference between encountering a problem, and simply finding something difficult
- Use a process for solving problems
- Understand how people solve problems differently and the benefits this diversity brings
- Create an action plan for a current problem and/or decision, showing a clear evidence base.

½ day

Module PS16 Recruitment & Selection

This programme offers a suite of modules to develop the sifting, behavioural interviewing and assessment skills of staff. The modular approach will enable trainees to select those modules which apply to the recruitment and selection processes applicable to their target population. The approach also provides a more flexible and time efficient option for participants.

There are 4 separate modules each of which has a pre-workshop assignment.



Module PS16

Module 1

Writing Specifications & Short Listing

This module consists of a half day workshop, preceded by a pre workshop assignment. The pre workshop assignment provides an overview of the recruitment process together with information on:

- Assessing and scoring applicants
- The legal framework
- Diversity and discrimination
- Drawing up job and person specifications
- Recording assessment outcomes
- Guidelines for providing feedback

A key part of the workshop involves mock assessments when participants will assess applicants for a single post as an assessment panel of two/three. The focus of these assessments will be on the requirement to source objective evidence and will also include operating effectively as a panel and obtaining evidence for Feedback.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the benefits of a recruitment processes and the risks of not following the process
- Write clear job and person specifications
- Obtain appropriate support
- Use a systematic approach to assessing applicants.
- Assess and shortlist applications fairly and objectively
- Record application assessment outcomes and provide feedback

Duration

4 hours

Module PS16

Module 2

Recruitment & Selection Interviewing

Duration

This module focuses exclusively on the benefits and skills of behavioural interviewing. It is particularly useful if you are new to recruitment Interviewing.

Participants complete a pre workshop assignment which covers:

- Preparing and structuring an interview
- Direct and indirect discrimination
- Accommodating diverse and cultural differences
- Interview techniques
- Review sessions
- Completing paperwork and feedback.

The assignment is followed by a two day highly experiential and practical workshop.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Understand the role of the interview within the recruitment process
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of an interview panel
- Appreciate diverse and cultural differences.
- Use competence based questioning
- Listen effectively
- Take interview notes effectively
- Make recruitment decisions based on objective evidence
- Provide constructive feedback

2 days

Module PS16

Module 3

Skills & Processes Refresher

This module is a one day refresher aimed at people who have had no experience of recruitment and selection interviewing in the past 3 years.

If you have no experience of recruitment and election Interviewing you should attend the first two modules.

Similar to the other modules within this suite the one day workshop is preceded by a pre workshop assignment.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Write clear job and person specifications
- Use a systematic approach to assessing applicants.
- Assess and shortlist applications fairly and objectively
- Record application assessment outcomes and provide feedback
- Understand the role of the interview within the recruitment process
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of an interview panel
- Appreciate diverse and cultural differences.
- Use competence based questioning
- Listen effectively
- Take interview notes effectively
- Make recruitment decisions based on objective evidence
- Provide constructive feedback.

Duration

1 day

Module PS16

Module 4

Assessment Centre Skills

This module focuses exclusively on the skills required for Assessing candidates and is targeted at participants who will be conducting assessment days for candidates.

The module is designed to include Behavioural Questioning, Group Discussion and Role Play. There is a short pre workshop assignment followed by a one day workshop. Participants will be highly involved throughout the workshop element, which is a highly experiential and practical providing opportunity to observe, record and evaluate evidence and agree a final decision with a team of assessors.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Conduct a competency based assessment
- Use a variety of assessment methods and tools
- Accommodate diverse and cultural differences.
- Observe, classify, score and evaluate objectively and without bias
- Make sound selection decisions based
- Use effective competence based questions
- Listening effectively
- Take effective interview notes
- Complete assessment documentation
- Provide constructive feedback.

Duration

1 day

Module PS17

Writing Powerful Reports

This programme consists of a pre-programme assignment followed by a four hour workshop.

A pre-requisite for the programme is knowledge of the areas of identifying writing objectives, planning main points, considering your audience, ensuring the words, sentences and paragraphs are effective, which are covered in the Writing with your Audience in Mind programme. These areas will only be reviewed briefly during the pre-programme assignment and the workshop.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Structure reports or board papers
- Understand the types of information which may go into reports and board papers, where this information will go and the best methods for communicating it
- Use appropriate layout and format for reports and board papers
- Produce reports and board papers that are accessible and appropriate for your potential audience
- Produce a report or board paper that has more impact through the use of structure, layout, use of plain English and good communication practices.

Duration

4 hours

Module PS18

Writing with your Audience In Mind

Duration

This programme provides a foundation for all the other written communication programmes we offer. It will enable you to learn the basics about written communication, planning, structuring and audience impact.

The programme consists of a pre-work assignment followed by a four hour workshop. The workshop is designed to provide opportunities to put the learning from the assignment into practice.

Learning Outcomes:

The aim of the programme is to enable you to:

- Identify the objective and audience for each piece of writing
- Understand the needs of different audiences including those who make use of software to 'read' the information for them
- Identify the pros and cons of different methods of communication and those appropriate for different types of messages
- Assess the extent to which what you have produced is Plain English
- Know where support/guidance is within your organisation to help you avoid unnecessary rework and to become increasingly effective in your writing
- Recognise circumstances which could damage the reputation of your organisation and explain how these can be avoided
- Improve the visual impact of a piece of written work
- Balance the need for brevity with completeness and list the different editing techniques and areas
- Recognise the features of well-written and poorly written documents.

4 hours



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