



Communication Skills for Life

Bespoke Training for Schools



In Malcolm Gladwell's compelling *Outliers* he suggests that one of the keys to success is "a set of skills that have to be learned.....knowing what to say to whom, knowing when to say it, and knowing how to say it for maximum effect."

This is the focus of Jayne Constantinis's work with schools - helping adults and children improve their communication skills and learn the techniques to be able to perform to their very best ability (even those who are not naturally gifted). The result is greater confidence, increased self esteem and, often, more fruitful relationships in and out of school. It's an important life skill which is being neglected in an increasingly technology-obsessed world.

Why Jayne Constantinis?

Jayne's unique style of training draws on 25 years working as a live BBC television voice over and news reader, as a presenter of broadcast and corporate programmes, as a speaker at live events, and as a writer. She started her working life in corporate and financial PR and spent several years in-house, managing a law firm's corporate communications.

Her BBC Television series on Mexico was nominated for a BAFTA; voice-over credits include Sony and Channel 4 and she has written for Conde Nast Traveller and Good Housekeeping. She learned journalism at the LCP, has an acting diploma from the Royal Academy of Music and a Modern Languages degree from Cambridge.

For 20 years Jayne has been helping teachers, children, corporate CEOs, celebrity athletes, lawyers and sales teams with their communication skills.

Jayne's approach

Jayne's approach is pragmatic, supportive and creative. She distils all she's learned from 25 years in front of a camera/microphone/audience, and shares it with others in the form of highly practical tips and strategies. The objective is to enable each individual to develop communication habits which will serve them well in all areas of their life. To this end the focus is on both performance and content. This training is not about acting. It's about remaining authentic, gaining confidence, being the very best you can be.



The training

The training is bespoke. Length and number of sessions, size of group, focus of content are all tailored to the needs of the school. The sessions take the form of hands-on, interactive workshops, built around realistic exercises, leading to immediate improvements in the training room. All of this in a lively, constructive and nurturing atmosphere, with some fun along the way.

Below is an outline of the kind of training which has been effective for teachers and pupils.

Teachers

Many teachers lack confidence when communicating with parents/colleagues in formal situations such as curriculum talks/subject presentations (despite experiencing no such issues in the classroom). For this group a half-day session for four people works well. Areas covered include:

- Confidence - dispelling the myths
- Audience and content planning
- Structuring content for maximum impact
- Developing a personal 'brand'
- Dealing with nerves - being in control
- Performance (a set of practical tips for each individual)
- Answering difficult questions.

Attendees are filmed 'in action' so that we can celebrate the good things and identify areas for improvement. A 6-month programme of post-training support is provided, to encourage on-going engagement and commitment.

Larger numbers can be accommodated (anything up to 100), and in a shorter session. This would take the form of a 'Top Tips' presentation on general communication skills or, specifically, on small talk and networking techniques.



Pupils (Year 6 onwards) - group work

For children, the emphasis is on fundamental, age-appropriate, face to face communication skills which are relevant to their lives and where they can see the benefits of establishing new habits. A typical session would be 45 minutes, for 10 pupils. We focus in particular on:

- Persuasion techniques
- The power of the apology
- Communicating better with adults
- Non-verbal behaviours
- Positive communication
- Dealing with challenging situations (peer pressure, unpleasant comments)
- The art of public speaking

The workshop-style sessions involve role play and group work and a lot of fun! There's no written work. The children learn simple, practical structures for each area and are encouraged to put these into practice between sessions so that they can feed back the results to the group.

One to one interview practice

As well as group sessions, Jayne works one-to-one with pupils who are preparing for interviews. Here, the emphasis is on building confidence, coping with challenging questions, structuring answers, rehearsing possible topics and learning to sustain energy/enthusiasm for the duration of an interview. This is about empowering each child to communicate their ideas so that they can do themselves justice in this high stress environment.

What teachers have said

"I really can't thank you enough for working so hard and passionately with us. From the small practical tips to the much larger picture of how we are/ would like to be perceived by those around us professionally, I feel you have given me the beginnings of a most valued life skill that I fully intend on continuing to develop."

"It completely took me out of my comfort zone, but all for the better and it was so good to be able to actually take some practical advice and strategies away."

"Thank you so much for yesterday. It was inspiring, effective and fun".