



# Communication Skills for Practice Development



## Introduction

Being a successful lawyer is no longer about technical expertise alone. 21st century lawyers must also be skilled in winning new business; nurturing client relationships; enhancing their firm's brand externally and building their own reputation internally.

Section C of the SRA's most recent Competence Statement for solicitors suggests that they should be able to "communicate clearly and effectively, orally and in writing"; "establish and maintain effective and professional relations with clients and other people". Communication is officially no longer a soft skill. It's a business imperative – one of the keys to building a successful practice. It's a skill which is not taught at law school, and it's an area where so called 'millennials', particularly, struggle.

This programme, four modules delivered over two half-days, is a comprehensive, in-depth guide to the communication skills lawyers need. Within this framework, content is tailored to the needs/strengths/weaknesses of the individual attendees.

The result - increased confidence, a set of practical tools, and a change in mindset; lawyers who are empowered to win more business, develop client relationships, support their firm's marketing objectives and grow their own practice.

### 1. Building your own brand

This first module covers the fundamentals of effective communication while enabling attendees to take control of their own 'brand'/style. It's about establishing good habits in the areas of preparation, audience analysis, message planning, verbal and non-verbal techniques. But it's also about remaining authentic; identifying our strengths and weaknesses; being the best each of us can be. Content includes:

- Tone of voice – written and verbal
- Online/digital/social media presence
- Dress – being appropriate and confident; supporting the brand.

### 2. Presenting/pitching skills

It's no longer enough for lawyers to simply stand up and tell people what they know. Audiences are discerning; they have short concentration spans, and they are time poor. For this reason it's vital that lawyers who want to be valuable ambassadors for their firm (or who want to win a new piece of business) know how to engage, delight, surprise, enthuse and fascinate audiences (however dry the subject). Content needs to be relevant,



memorable, concise and well structured. Performance needs to be authentic and impactful. And, vitally, speakers must make an emotional connection with their audience. This does not happen by chance. It requires a set of skills which need to be learned. In this module we tackle those essential tools.

Session includes:

- Preparation techniques – audience and content
- How and why you need to resonate with your audience
- How to be concise and clear
- Structure – how to choreograph a presentation/pitch
- Performance issues including body language, eye contact, vocal skills
- Rehearsal – what, why and how
- Dealing with nerves – practical tools for being calm and in control
- PowerPoint – how not to kill your audience with bullets
- Specific tools for webinars or media situations (as relevant).

### 3. Building presence and gravitas

Many young lawyers struggle with issues of ‘presence’ and gravitas. They feel undermined and judged by clients, colleagues and/or senior partners. They struggle to get their point across in meetings, and fail to do themselves justice on conference calls and in presentations. In essence, they are missing opportunities to contribute, to grow, to impress. And all the while, confidence is being eroded at this important phase in their career.

The key to solving these common problems lies in establishing robust communication habits. By addressing your mind set and your skill set you will be better able to deal with challenging situations; you will be more in control and therefore more confident.

During this module you will learn:

- Practical tools to grow gravitas and ‘presence’ - including eye contact, voice projection, body language, pace and pauses
- Individual strategies for dealing with interruptions/challenge
- The art of being assertive, not aggressive
- Negotiation/persuasion techniques.

### 4. Building relationships – the art of networking and small talk

A great number of people, even those with many years experience, dislike and/or fear small talk. They are apprehensive about both formal networking events and informal chatting with clients or potential clients. As a result, many avoid these situations, thereby missing opportunities to make new relationships or cement existing ones.



There are two elements to being more accomplished at networking/small talk – mind set and skill set. In this module we work on techniques to feel more confident and ‘perform’ more effectively. At the heart of this session we learn to see networking not as an opportunity to sell but to learn. We develop a more curious and enthusiastic approach which leads to real conversations and (the beginnings of) genuine relationships. Session includes:

- Content preparation – how to fill a treasure chest with possible topics
- ‘Audience’ preparation – how to make a connection/resonate with them
- Rehearsal – what to rehearse and how
- Techniques for starting and maintaining conversations
- Dealing with difficult questions
- Journalists’ tricks for asking questions
- How to end a conversation!
- Following up after an event.

### Follow-up programme

Jayne provides a unique 6-month programme of post-training support, to encourage attendees’ on-going engagement and commitment. This involves email communication to check on progress; support for subsequent presenting/speaking opportunities; sharing examples (articles, clips) of good/bad practice. You are thus able to consolidate and develop what was learned in the training room.

### Why Jayne Constantinis?

Jayne’s unique style of training draws on 25 years working as a live BBC TV 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 financial PR and branding, and spent several years in-house, managing a law firm’s corporate communications.

Her BBC TV series on Mexico was nominated for a BAFTA; voice-over credits include Sony and Channel 4 and she has written for Condé 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 lawyers, executives, celebrity athletes, accountants, teachers and sales teams with their communication skills.

### Jayne’s approach and logistics

Jayne’s approach is pragmatic, supportive and creative. The sessions are highly interactive and practical, built around realistic exercises (filmed),



leading to immediate improvements in the training room. All of this in a lively, constructive and nurturing atmosphere, with some fun along the way.

Training is carried out at your offices (UK or beyond) or at premises in London SW11.

#### What clients have said

“I cannot thank you enough for all your help, I feel so lucky that xxxxxxxx is enlightened enough to invest in us this way, and of course that our L&D team had you on hand! This is a turning point for me. Thank you again, I think you might have changed my life.”

**Karen, international law firm**

“I honestly believe my own personal profile has been raised as a result of your training. It wasn’t just tips on how to effectively present, although that was great, but it has given me a confidence I haven’t had in the past.”

**Julie, law firm. London**

“Best event I’ve ever been to – practical, potentially life-changing.”

**Vicky, Lawyer, financial services**

“Jayne Constantinis ... is simply fabulous. She trained me at xxxxxxxxxxxxxx and was so good that I had her train my entire team (and half the office).”

**Natasha, Partner, law firm**

“Excellent, couldn’t be improved.”

**Lawyer, feedback form on communications workshop.**