

Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Essential Skills for Policy Makers

Academic Year 2017/18

Essential Skills is a para-academic programme that aims to equip you with writing, communication, and career skills that are useful for your academic and professional success. The *Essential Skills* programme consists of a series of two-hour long, stand-alone workshops that you may attend throughout Semesters 1 and 2 of your academic year. They are hands-on workshops that aim to develop practical skills for personal and professional development. These workshops are grouped under the following two tracks:

1. **Communications**, including workshops spanning across a broad range of skills, such as writing, reading, visual, verbal and nonverbal communication.
2. **Professional and Career Development**, including workshops aiming to strengthen your career development skills, such as cover letter and resume writing, presentation skills, career planning, and networking.

You can attend as many workshops as you wish. However, to receive an *Essential Skills* certificate in one track, you have to attend at least five workshops within that specific track. Some workshops can be double-counted toward both certificates and are indicated below with an asterisk (*).

Hence, throughout the Master programmes, you can earn up to two *Essential Skills* certificates, one in *Communications* and one in *Professional and Career Development*. These certificates form a portion of a your personal development portfolio and indicate to prospective employers the additional effort you undertook in personal and professional development.

SEMESTER 1 (August to October 2017)

Track One: Communications

Essential Skills in "Communications" include workshops spanning across a broad range of skills, including writing, reading, visual, verbal and nonverbal communication. The workshop synopses and schedule are below.

1) Writing for Graduate-level Coursework: Essays and Reflection Essays

19 August 2017 (Saturday), 9:00am – 11:00am, MM SR 2-1

The aim of this workshop is to introduce you to the expectations of academic writing at an English-speaking university and to effective steps in writing a reflection essay. Topics that will be explored include essay organization and structure, developing a thesis statement, topic sentences, paragraphing, unity and coherence. Tips on writing a good reflection essay (e.g. for a study trip or on assigned readings) will also be discussed.

2) Writing Policy Memos and Briefs

30 August 2017 (Wednesday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-2

What is a policy memo? What is the difference between a policy memo and a policy brief? This workshop aims to introduce you to the fundamentals of crafting effective policy memos and policy briefs.

3) Critical Reading and Writing

19 August 2017 (Saturday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-1

Research has shown a close relationship between the ability to read critically and effective, persuasive writing. This workshop introduces you to good critical reading practices, using a sample graduate-level text. It will also discuss how to incorporate materials from readings in an essay without losing your own "voice."

4) Speech Preparation, Structure, and Visual Communication Strategies*

4 September 2017 (Monday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-4

This workshop discusses various aspects of speech preparation: selecting a topic, determining the central message, audience analysis, ways to begin and end a speech, and writing a speech outline. A particular focus is on preparing persuasive speeches on policy issues. Effective visual communication strategies are also discussed.

5) Speech Delivery: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Strategies*

5 September 2017 (Tuesday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-4

This hands-on workshop explores various issues related to speech delivery. Topics include the speaker's voice, pacing, pauses, volume, and articulation. The workshop also explores nonverbal communication strategies, including movement, gestures, and eye contact. The aim of this workshop is to allow you to gain confidence in delivering a persuasive speech in front of an audience.

6) Writing a Winning Résumé*

6 October 2017, 12:00pm – 2:00pm, Venue TBA

This workshop suggests tips on composing an effective résumé and introduces you to the PAR/STAR method, a practical way to highlight and quantify your work's achievements. Participants are strongly encouraged to bring along a copy of their cover letter and résumé for self- and peer review. **Note:** *You must attend this workshop if you want your résumé to be included in the LKY School Résumé Book.*

Track Two: Professional and Career Development

Essential Skills in "Professional and Career Development" include workshops aiming to strengthen your career development skills. They cover a vast array of topics, including cover letter and resume writing, presentation skills, career planning, and networking. The workshop synopses and schedule are below.

1) Storytelling – Articulate your Personal Value Proposition (PVP)

2 Aug 2017 and 8 Aug 2017 (conducted during Orientation)

In this practical workshop, you will discover why storytelling is such a powerful communication tool and how it can be an effective tool for influencing others. You will mine your life experiences for stories that can be used to build relationships and create a positive impact in both student and professional life. You will also learn what makes a good story, how to structure your stories effectively and how to tell your stories so they have a greater impact.

2) Success with LinkedIn

2 Aug 2017 (conducted during Orientation), 4.45pm – 6.00pm and 21 August 2017, 12.15pm – 2.00pm, MM SR 2-1

It has never been more important to build and maintain a stellar LinkedIn profile. The virtual professional network has morphed from an online resume and networking site to a comprehensive personal branding resource. Whether you seek a career in non-profit, government or the private sector, this workshop will help you to learn how to use this online platform that will benefit you throughout your career.

3) Networking Basics – Level 1

4 Aug 2017 (conducted during Orientation)

Learn how to make small talk, convey a good first impression, and network your way to success. How do you strike a conversation with people who are more professional seniority than you? How do you leave a memorable impression with people you meet at a networking event or social occasions? How do you go about attracting your target employers or key stakeholders? This workshop not only promotes learning of essential interpersonal skills, but also helps overcoming what prevents you from using those skills effectively.

4) Speech Preparation, Structure, and Visual Communication Strategies*

4 September 2017 (Monday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-4

This workshop discusses various aspects of speech preparation: selecting a topic, determining the central message, audience analysis, ways to begin and end a speech, and writing a speech outline. A particular focus is on preparing persuasive speeches on policy issues. Effective visual communication strategies are also discussed.

5) Speech Delivery: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Strategies*

5 September 2017 (Tuesday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, MM SR 2-4

This hands-on workshop explores various issues related to speech delivery. Topics include the speaker's voice, pacing, pauses, volume, and articulation. The workshop also explores nonverbal communication strategies, including movement, gestures, and eye contact. The aim of this workshop is to allow you to gain confidence in delivering a persuasive speech in front of an audience.

6) Career Planning – Design Your Career

6 September 2017 (Wednesday), 12:00pm – 2:00pm, Venue TBA

This workshop will introduce you to the "design thinking approach" to career planning, and guide students through the initial stages of the process. You will be asked to reflect on your values, interests and preferences in order to develop greater self-awareness. You will, then, review your responses and begin to explore potential career paths. Finally, you will discuss the next steps you should pursue in your career-design process.

7) Networking Essentials – Level 2

4 October 2017 (Wednesday), 12.15pm – 2:00pm

"If wealth creation is global, social capital and knowledge are the leverage." – Dr. Roger Hayes. Roger is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the LKY School and a leading international public relations and public affairs professional. During this workshop, Roger will introduce a matrix methodology for networking and offer practical tips that you can implement straight away and from which even seasoned networkers can benefit.

8) Writing a Winning Résumé*

6 October 2017, 12:00pm – 2:00pm, Venue TBA

This workshop suggests tips on composing an effective résumé and introduces you to the PAR/STAR method, a practical way to highlight and quantify your work's achievements. Participants are strongly encouraged to bring along a copy of their cover letter and résumé for self- and peer review. **Note:** *You must attend this workshop if you want your résumé to be included in the LKY School Résumé Book.*

SEMESTER 2 (January to May 2018)

Track One: Communications

1) TED-style Presentations

Many of us have come across TED presentations that are attractive, engaging and effective. How should you prepare differently for a TED-style presentation? This workshop addresses this and other questions related to preparing and delivering a TED-style presentation.

2) Client Presentations*

The aim of this workshop is to help you attain both competence and confidence in delivering an informative and persuasive oral presentation. This workshop is particularly beneficial for MPP seniors preparing for their PAE conference, MPA students preparing for their GSP conference, and students who wish to hone their presentation skills in preparation for internship and job interviews.

3) Email Writing and Etiquette*

Despite email communication being a ubiquitous part of academic, personal and professional lives, many still struggle in mastering the art of email writing. This workshop aims to introduce you to good practices of email composition and management, and is suitable for those who desire to improve their workplace communication skill.

4) Intercultural Communication

We live, study, and work in an increasingly diverse world. Thus, proper understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity is important for effective communication. This interactive workshop aims to introduce you to the different dimensions that shape our behaviours and thinking patterns, as well as how we perceive others people's communication and behaviours, to improve the way we communicate in intercultural contexts.

5) Writing a Winning Résumé*

This workshop suggests tips on composing an effective résumé and introduces you to the PAR/STAR method, a practical way to highlight and quantify your work's achievements. Participants are strongly encouraged to bring along a copy of their cover letter and résumé for self- and peer review. **Note:** *You must attend this workshop if you want your résumé to be included in the LKY School Résumé Book.*

6) Writing a Persuasive Cover Letter*

A cover letter is a concise self-marketing document. There are different types of cover letters, and the ability to write an effective cover letter that corresponds to a particular situation is essential in securing an invitation to a job interview. This workshop introduces you to different types of cover letters and effective strategies in composing them.

Track Two: Professional and Career Development

1) Strategies for the Job and Internship Hunting

Are you preparing to enter or re-enter the job market? Or are you looking for a summer internship? Equip yourself with the necessary job hunting strategies to tackle the global job market. Discover tips and tricks to finding opportunities that are interesting and relevant to you, and understand how to locate and grow your personal networks to land the job you want.

2) Writing a Winning Résumé*

This workshop suggests tips on composing an effective résumé and introduces you to the PAR/STAR method, a practical way to highlight and quantify your work's achievements. Participants are strongly encouraged to bring along a copy of their cover letter and résumé for self- and peer review. **Note:** *You must attend this workshop if you want your résumé to be included in the LKY School Résumé Book.*

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4) Mastering Job Interviews and "Elevator Pitches"

"Why should we hire you?" This workshop seeks to help you to answer this question by articulating your personal value proposition (PVP) and developing it into a quick, punchy elevator pitch. This workshop will also help you understand the selection process, how to prepare for job interviews, how to do well during the interview and how to ensure post-interview success.

5) Email Writing and Etiquette*

Despite email communication being a ubiquitous part of academic, personal and professional lives, many still struggle in mastering the art of email writing. This workshop aims to introduce you to good practices of email composition and management, and is suitable for those who desire to improve their workplace communication skill.

6) Client Presentations*

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Essential Skills at a Glance

Workshops denoted with an asterisk () can count toward both Certificates.*

	TRACK ONE: Communications	TRACK TWO: Career and Professional Development
SEM 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Essay Writing for Graduate-level Coursework: Essays and Reflection Essays <i>19 August 2017</i> 2. Writing Policy Memos and Briefs <i>30 August 2017</i> 3. Critical Reading and Writing <i>19 August 2017</i> 4. Speech Preparation, Structure, and Visual Communication Strategies* <i>4 September 2017</i> 5. Speech Delivery: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Strategies* <i>5 September 2017</i> 6. Writing a Winning Résumé* <i>6 October 2017</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storytelling: Articulating Your Personal Value Proposition <i>2 August 2017 and 8 August 2017</i> 2. Success with LinkedIn <i>2 August 2017 and 21 August 2017</i> 3. Networking Basics – Level 1 <i>4 August 2017</i> 4. Speech Preparation, Structure, and Visual Communication Strategies* <i>4 September 2017</i> 5. Speech Delivery: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Strategies* <i>5 September 2017</i> 6. Career Planning – Design Your Career <i>6 September 2017</i> 7. Networking Essentials – Level 2 <i>4 October 2017</i> 8. Writing a Winning Résumé* <i>6 October 2017</i>
SEM 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TED-style Presentations 2. Client Presentations* 3. Email Writing and Etiquette* 4. Intercultural Communication* 5. Writing a Winning Résumé* 6. Writing a Persuasive Cover Letter* 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategies for the Job and Internship Hunting 2. Writing a Winning Résumé* 3. Writing a Persuasive Cover Letter* 4. Mastering Job Interviews and "Elevator Pitches" 5. Email Writing and Etiquette* 6. Client Presentations* 7. Intercultural Communication*