

# Be ready for the expanding marketplace: Career paths for the professional communicator

*IABC/Chicago*

*Workshop*

*9 December 08*

Be Heard®

IABC INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

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ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

# Presenters

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Peak Marketing and Communications

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Senior Consultant Strategic Communications,  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Diane Laux, ABC, Independent Writer

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***Do not fall into the error of the artisan who boasts of twenty years of experience in their craft when in fact they have had only ONE year of experience, twenty times.***

Coined from the novel, *Shibumi*, by Trevanian

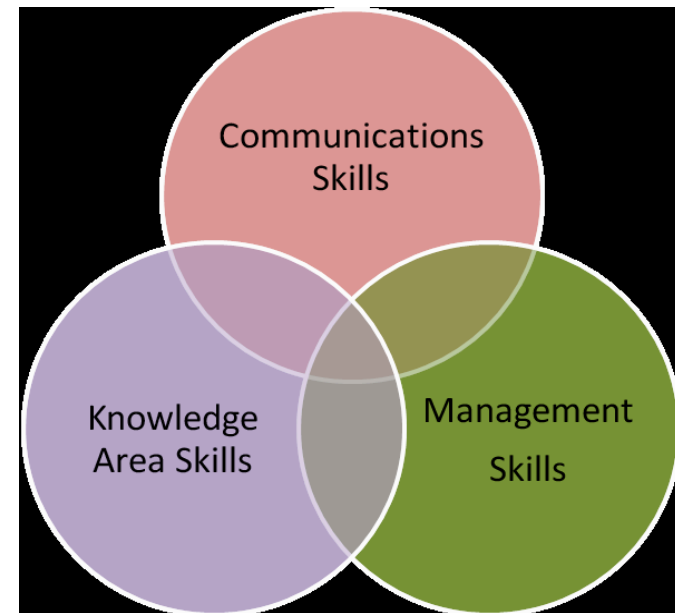
# Session Objectives

- **Conduct the communicator's competency audit**
- **Identify steps to enhance your competencies**
- **Build your skills with accreditation**
- **Q&A**

# Communicator's Competency Model

## The model

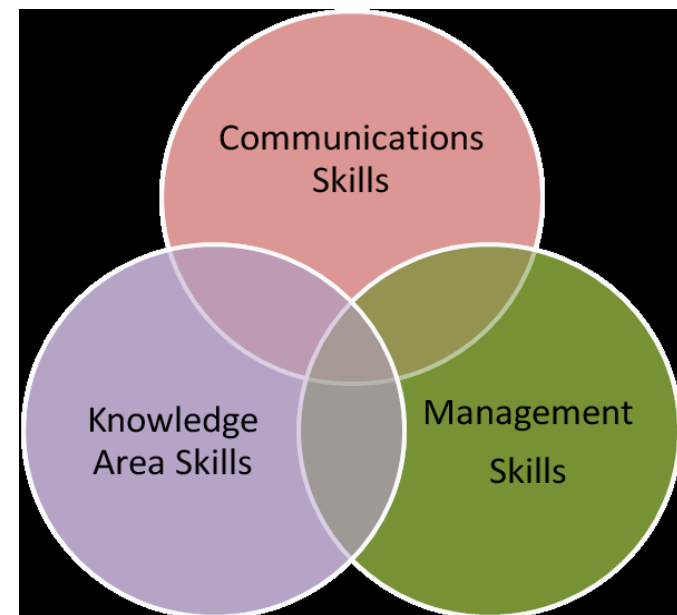
- **Is directed to post-baccalaureate practitioners**
- **Assumes mastering of basic skills in**
  - **Personal effectiveness**
  - **Academic learning**
  - **Workplace protocols**



# Communicator's Competency Model

## Professional Development Guide

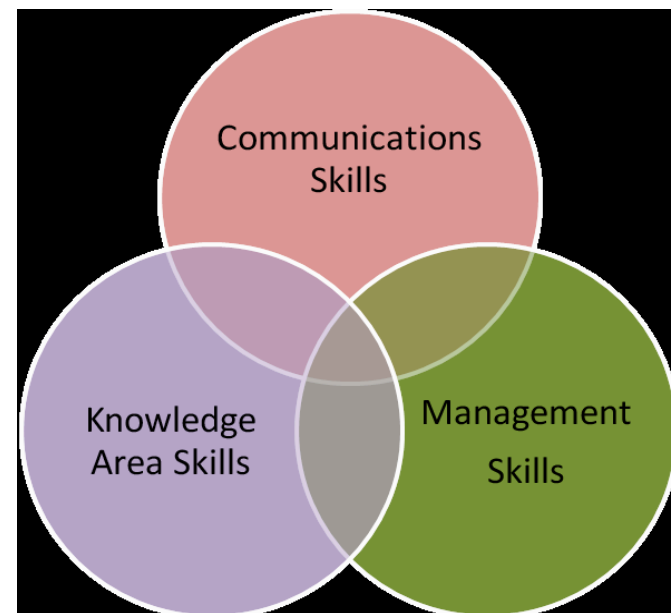
- **Communication skills**
- **Management skills**
- **Knowledge area skills**



# Communicator's Competency Model

## Four Levels of Professional Development

- **Level 1**
  - Entry coordinator
  - 1 – 4 years
- **Level 2**
  - Entry/management
  - 5 – 9 years
- **Level 3**
  - Mid Manager/specialist
  - 10 – 15 years
- **Level 4**
  - Senior Communicator
  - 16 + years



# Why Make Professional Development a Priority NOW?

- **Position yourself for the future**
  - Raises
  - Promotions
  - Job security
- **Revitalize your career**
  - Do you feel burned out?
  - Are you at a career crossroads?
  - Is your professional “market niche” shrinking?
  - Do you want to move into a different type of work that you can feel passionate about?
  - Is a sabbatical in your future?
- **Take advantage of growing opportunities in freelance consulting and project work**



# Build Your Skills

- **IABC/Chicago and other professional association meetings**
  - Networking (talk to people in other communication disciplines)
- **Conferences, seminars, workshops, graduate education**
- **Sign up for webinars, emails, RSS feeds**
  - Information is often free
- **Read up! (See bibliography)**
  - *Communication World*
  - *CW Bulletin*
- **Seek out new projects at work**
- **Volunteer opportunities**
- **Professional certification programs, including IABC accreditation**

# Build Your Skills with Accreditation

- **Accreditation is IABC's professional credential program.**
- **Measures a practitioner's ability to think and plan strategically and manage a communication function.**
- **Successful candidates are designated an Accredited Business Communicator (ABC).**



# Strategic Planning Process

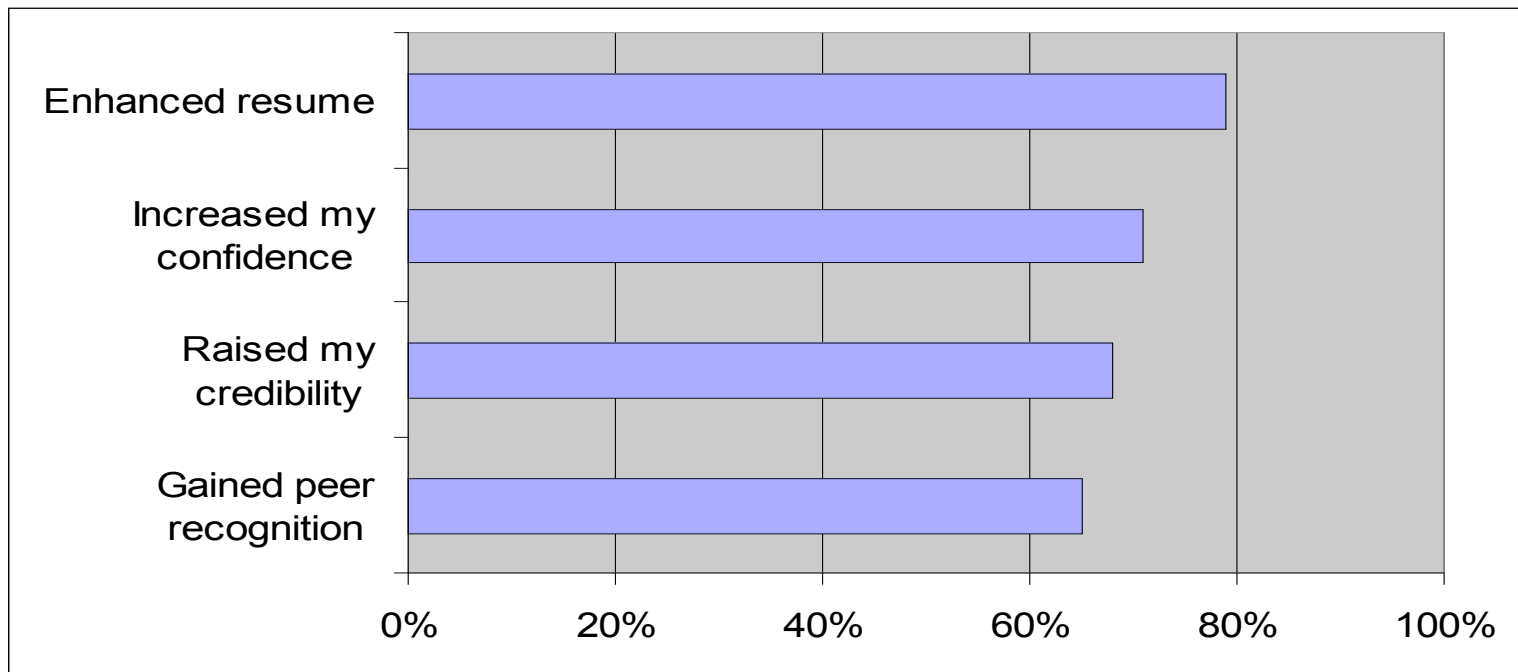
- **Situational analysis**
- **Identifying the problem or opportunity**
- **Developing the solution/plan**
- **Selling the plan to management**
- **Implementing/monitoring the plan**
- **Evaluating/measuring the plan**

# Build Your Skills With Accreditation

- **Methodology**
  - **Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in the fall of 2007.**
  - **In November and December of 2007, quantitative web-based surveys were conducted with ABCs and their supervisors and clients.**
  - **LCWA Research Group completed their report in mid-January 2008.**



# Value/benefit of Accreditation to the Individual



# Value/benefit of Accreditation to a Supervisor

- 1. Increases credibility to department and organization**
- 2. Increases understanding of effective communication practices**
- 3. Increases effectiveness of internal and external communication**
- 4. Communicates strategically**
- 5. Brings new knowledge and skills to the job**
- 6. Receives more respect within the industry**

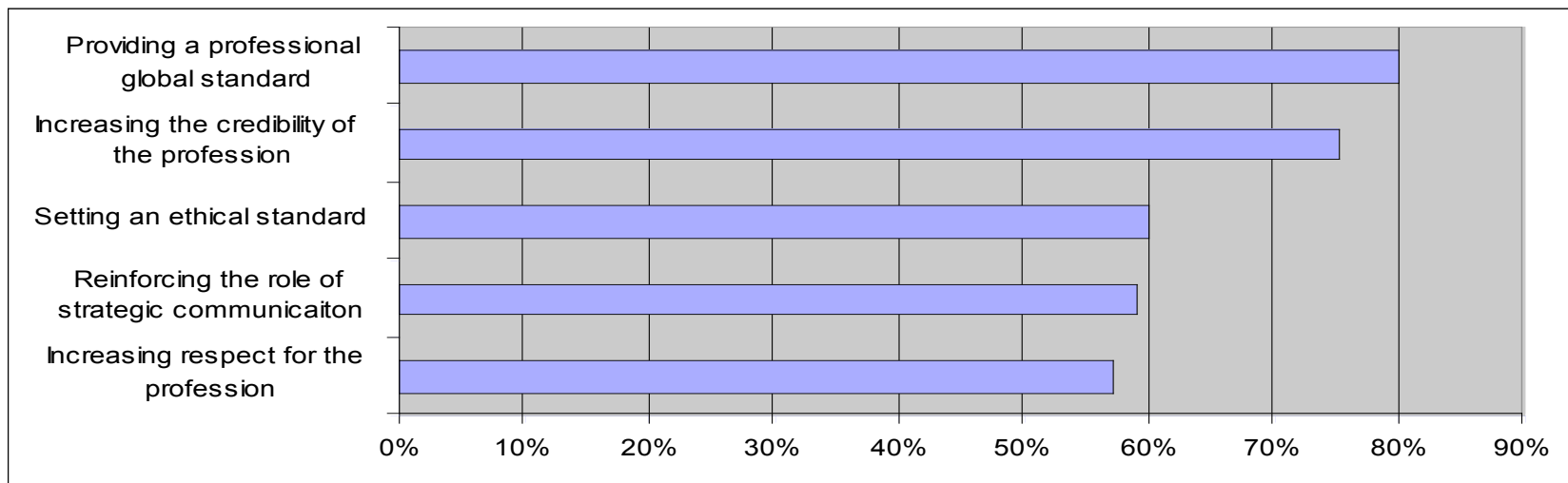


# Value/benefit of Accreditation to Clients

1. **Increases understanding of effective communication practices**
2. **Gives more credibility to my organization**
3. **Communicates strategically**
4. **Bring new knowledge and skills**
5. **Receives more respect within the industry**



# Value to the Communication Profession





# Value of Accreditation

- ABCs increase credibility and respect to themselves, their departments and organizations, their industries and to the communication profession.
- Accredited Business Communicators add strategic value to their organizations and clients by practicing strategic communication management
- IABC's accreditation program is gateway to learning and advancing the practice of strategic communication management



# ABC Preferred

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## Editor of Allstate Now/Senior Communication Consultant

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<b>Job ID:</b>	4165096	<b>Posted:</b>	February 4, 2008
<b>Position Title:</b>	Editor of Allstate Now/Senior Communication Consultant	<b>Job Type:</b>	Full-Time
<b>Company Name:</b>	Allstate Insurance Company	<b>Job Duration:</b>	Indefinite
<b>Industry:</b>	Insurance	<b>Min Education:</b>	BA/BS/Undergraduate
<b>Job Function:</b>	Web/Technology	<b>Min Experience:</b>	5-7 Years
<b>Location(s):</b>	Northbrook, Illinois, 60062, United States		

**ABC Preferred**

ABC Preference given to those applicants who have earned the [Accredited Business Communicator](#) designation.

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**Contact Person:** Kathleen Baylon  
**Email Address:** [kbayl@allstate.com](mailto:kbayl@allstate.com)

# Next Steps

- **Be the artisan who is an informed, growing practitioner.**
- **Develop your career plan. Ask an ABC for input.**
- **Is accreditation part of your professional development?**
- **Visit [www.iabc.com/abc](http://www.iabc.com/abc) to learn about accreditation.**
- **Review your competency audit. Do you have the skills and experience to offer your employer or client what they value most in communication activities?**

# Questions?