

A COMMUNICATOR'S COMPETENCY MODEL

Charting a path for a professional communication career is different for every individual, but like having a highway map before a journey, it is important for everyone to understand what their destination is, to enable best results. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the association holding the global standard in organizational communication, is in the unique position of understanding many of the trends that may affect the communication practitioner.

The IABC Accreditation Council, informed by their membership in the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management in addition to input from Accredited Business Communicators worldwide, developed the Communicator's Competency Model to assist business communicators in planning their professional development to meet the needs of an expanding marketplace. The model

- Identifies communication, management and knowledge-area competencies crucial to organizational communication excellence, and
- Provides suggestions for gaining skills through the workplace, volunteer efforts, education and accreditation.

DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Council has developed three documents to help communication professionals conduct their own competency audit and identify opportunities to advance their professional competencies:

Step-by-step Competency Audit – step-by-step instructions on conducting an individual competency audit.

Part One – Communicator's Competency Model – a guide with brief descriptions of the communication, management and knowledge area competencies expected of communication professionals as their experience and competencies develop across four levels (level 1 – 1 to 4 years; level 2 – 5 to 9 years; level 3 – 10 to 15 years; and level 4 – 16+ years) or from entry to senior positions. This model is directed to the post-baccalaureate communication professional and assumes an individual is mastering the basic skills necessary in all occupations – those pertaining to personal effectiveness, academic and workplace.

Part Two – Professional Development Skills Index – a guide which outlines opportunities to learn including: continuing education, IABC accreditation, certificates, workshops, seminars, conferences, reading, networking and volunteering. It gives communication professionals examples of everyday activities that will enhance skills and build confidence in their communication practice.

Professionals mastering competencies in Level 2, 5-9 years, are strong candidates for entering the accreditation learning experience.

THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

The recent Value of Accreditation Study, a study of ABCs, their supervisors and their clients (sponsored by IABC/Chicago and the L.C. Williams and Associates Research Group) noted there was significant value in the accreditation process in professional development including:

- ✓ 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.

To find out more about IABC and Accreditation, visit www.iabc.com/abc or contact Olivia Nucum at onucum@iabc.com.