



**REPRODUCIBLE  
TRAINING LIBRARY**  
Customizable Soft-Skills Courseware

# Talk Like a Leader

What Every Employee Needs to Hear



Instructor Guide

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## About the Reproducible Training Library

Reproducible Training Library (RTL) offers an unrivaled range of training programs that combine quality and affordability. These learning solutions are designed using proven adult-learning methods and offered at a price that will extend your training budget a lot further than you can imagine.

Structured as instructor-led programs, the RTL provides ready-to-use content on the topics and skills most needed in today's organizations. What's more, once you purchase and download an RTL product, it's yours to keep, customize, and use over and over again.

### Affordable Classroom Training

It takes 43 hours to develop a single hour of instructor-led training, according to research carried out by the Chapman Alliance.<sup>1</sup> For a half-day workshop—the minimum length of a classroom program in the RTL—this translates into a development cost of \$23,736, significantly more than it costs to purchase the entire RTL collection.

In addition to being cost effective, the RTL allows you to tap into a wide range of expertly developed training designs, each complete with an instructor guide, participant guide, and slideshow presentation. With just a few clicks of a mouse, you can download the Microsoft Word and PowerPoint files to your desktop in a matter of minutes.

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*"I was able to go from unzipping the RTL files to delivery in less than 2 hours, making the preparation time to delivery easy and much less stressful. The instructor guides are written in a way that is logical and makes the pre-workshop study time simple and less frustrating: No hunting for the right slides, no guessing what the instructional designer intended for each module!"*

—James T. Puett, Manager, Leadership and Organizational Development, Healthways Human Resources

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### Accelerated Learning – Accelerated Performance

The starting point for developing new titles for the RTL is to tap into the most contemporary thinking and best practices on topics that are proven to positively influence individual and organizational performance. Our experienced instructional designers review dozens of articles, books, and conference papers to isolate the critical components of a particular skill set. Then they use their expertise to create an effective training and learning design that is structured to enhance the learner's skills and improve his or her performance. A common instructional approach used in the development of RTL content is the "4P" instructional model, conceived by Dave Meier at the Center for Accelerated Learning:<sup>2</sup>

1. **Prepare** (the learner)
2. **Present** (the information)
3. **Practice**
4. **Perform** (provide job aids that help the learner transfer and reinforce the learning back on the job)

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<sup>1</sup> Chapman, Brian. "How Long Does it Take to Create Learning?" Chapman Alliance, 2010. [www.slideshare.net/bchapman\\_utah/how-long-does-it-take-to-create-learning](http://www.slideshare.net/bchapman_utah/how-long-does-it-take-to-create-learning). Calculation of development hours assumes the design includes a lesson plan, workbooks, handouts, and a supporting PowerPoint slide deck.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.alcenter.com>

## Customizable

Each classroom title in the RTL can be delivered or viewed without any modification. The open Word and PowerPoint formats, however, enable you to add your own unique elements and even change the entire look and feel of the content. Here are just a few ways you can customize the material:

- Add your organization's logo or brand.
- Place your own organization-specific content into the design.
- Change examples to fit your industry or work environment.
- Modify content to match company rules and procedures.
- Add, delete, or rearrange content to meet training time constraints.
- Change fonts, colors, and layout properties.

You can also combine more than one title into a longer training design, extract relevant sections and reuse them in other designs you have created, or use the general structure of one module to begin developing a completely new design. Whether you choose to use the material as designed or modify it to suit your needs, you'll find the RTL to be a flexible resource and a wise investment.

## License-Free

Buy once, use many times. It's a compelling model for any budget-challenged training department. Purchase any title from the library with the knowledge that you won't need to budget for any additional licensing fees or annual subscriptions. The material is yours to use in whatever way you choose.<sup>3</sup> You can freely distribute the material throughout your organization, make it available on your internal server, create unlimited hard copies, upload it to a Learning Management System (LMS), develop a customized version, and even embed the material in other training or learning systems you design.

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<sup>3</sup> Some restrictions apply.

## **Preparing for the Course**

Before conducting the training, we encourage you to read the Instructor Guide thoroughly, familiarize yourself with the program's components, and test-run the PowerPoint presentation.

If you would like written feedback on the course, make copies of the Course Evaluation form and distribute them at the end of the training.

## **What's Included in This Program**

This course contains several components:

- Instructor Guide
- Participant Guide
- Classroom PowerPoint Presentation
- One-page Learning Summary
- One-page Course Overview
- Course Evaluation Form

## **Materials Not Included**

You will need the following materials to conduct the course:

- Flip chart and markers
- If you choose to wrap up the program by asking participants to share key learning points, we recommend using a Koosh ball or beanbag for the activity (see "Learning Summary" section).
- Optional fun prize (used in "Alphabet Brainstorm")

## **Suggested Target Audience**

This program is appropriate for business professionals who are in leadership positions or aspire to leadership positions and want to improve critical communication skills.

## **Timing**

The timing suggestions noted in this course assume that you have experience facilitating instructor-led training. If you are a new facilitator, you may wish to allow more time. Regardless of your experience level, you and your participants will gain the most from the program if you devote time beforehand to understanding the content.

Please consider rehearsing the delivery in order to gauge the pace of the program and determine whether you need to adjust the timing.

Please note: Only the pages highlighted below are those featured in this preview.

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## Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Discover key communication phrases that express your vision and competence.
- Learn key communication phrases that reinforce your relationships and support of others.
- Explore ways to demonstrate accountability and insist on it in others.
- Learn how to deliver constructive criticism effectively.
- Understand how to show appreciation and offer meaningful praise to others.

### Instructor Notes

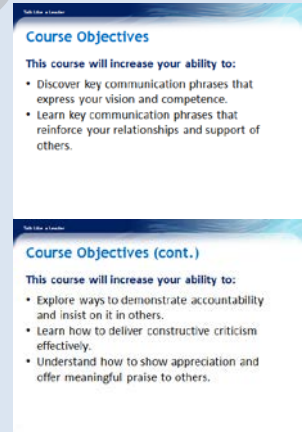


5 minutes



Introduce yourself and briefly describe your background.

Go over logistics (schedule, breaks, restrooms, etc.) and any ground rules for the day. Typical ground rules include showing respect for all participants, participating fully, not using electronics, and not interrupting or dominating the conversation.



Review the course objectives.

PREVIEW



## Introduction

The average person speaks up to 16,000 words per day.<sup>1</sup> Are your words meaningful or meaningless? A PBS Benchmark study based on the following statements indicates just how much better best-of-the-best organizations compare when it comes to communication:<sup>2</sup>

“Communication flows effectively from upper management to employees.” The best-of-the-best exceeded the benchmark by 13 percent.

“When good or bad things happen at my company, employees hear about it in a timely manner.” The best-of-the-best exceeded the benchmark by 17 percent.

“My supervisor/manager keeps us informed about our organization’s plans.” The best-of-the-best exceeded the benchmark by 14 percent.

“Managers and supervisors in my organization seek the opinions and thoughts of the employees who work here.” The best-of-the-best exceeded the benchmark by 16 percent.

“I am clear on my organization’s goal and future direction.” The best-of-the-best exceeded the benchmark by 15 percent.

Clearly, the best-of-the-best organizations excel at communicating with their employees. But how do you know which messages are most important for leaders to communicate?

There are a multitude of specific messages to communicate within an organization, but they can be organized into four general categories:

1. “I have a vision for the organization.”
2. “I have the skills to carry out that vision.”
3. “I know and care about you.”
4. “I want to help you.”

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<sup>1</sup> Mehl, et al., “Are Women Really More Talkative Than Men?” 82, quoted in Andrew Sisley, “Leadership Training.”

<sup>2</sup> *Peter Stark’s Blog*; “How to Communicate Your Vision Like Steve Jobs and the Best-of-the-Best,” blog entry by Peter Barron Stark, October 10, 2011

### Instructor Notes



5 minutes



Ask participants to read the Introduction, which provides an overview of why this topic matters and describes how the course will empower them as professionals.

Each message is translated into one of the program modules.

Module 1: Vision

Module 2: Competence

Module 3: Relationships









Module 4: Support

# MODULE 1

## Vision

### Objective

- Discover key communication phrases that express your vision.

Type of Activity	Section	Time (minutes)
 	<b>1.1</b> Message: "I have a vision for the organization."	15
 	<b>1.2</b> Be Inspiring	15
 	<b>1.3</b> Be Focused	15
 	<b>1.4</b> Be Action-Oriented	15

Total: 60 minutes

## 1.3 Be Focused

### Key Communication Phrase 2: “How does this fit with our vision or strategy?”

In a story shared by *Fast Company*,<sup>4</sup> the CEO of Iams, a premium pet food company, was offered the opportunity to be the subject of a cover story for a leading business magazine. He turned it down because he said he didn’t see how it would “improve the well-being of dogs and cats,” which is the company’s vision. He was focused on the vision and made decisions based on it.

### Ways to Align Vision and Decisions

- What are the high-level objectives of this project? What are the anticipated benefits?
- What are the intended (and unintended) consequences of succeeding? Of failing?
- If we pursue this opportunity, what projects will we have to forego?
- Is this project the best use of our time and money?

#### Individual Activity: Tie Your Responsibilities to Your Vision

*Instructions:* Choose one of your main tasks or responsibilities and write down how it connects to or supports your organization’s vision. If you don’t know your organization’s vision (or it doesn’t have one), connect it to your organization’s purpose or reason for existing.

#### Instructor Notes



15 minutes



“Your actions and decisions should reflect your vision.”

Review “Key Communication Phrase 2.”

“In order to help you determine if your decisions align with your vision, ask yourself these questions.”

Review “Ways to Align Vision and Decisions.”



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants 5 minutes to respond individually.

Debrief by asking volunteers to share their answers.

<sup>4</sup> *Fast Company*; “5 Rules for Making Your Vision Stick,” blog entry by Craig Chappelow, September 5, 2012.

## 2.1 Message: “I have the skills to carry out the vision.”

James Kouzes and Barry Posner are leading researchers of leadership. They found that credibility is the number one reason people follow someone.<sup>7</sup> Credibility was viewed as being knowledgeable, authoritative, confident, honest, and trustworthy.

### How to Demonstrate Credibility

- Be an expert (but not a know-it-all).
- Be yourself.
- Keep your word. Make realistic promises and follow through.
- Lead by listening. Show your desire to learn what others have to say and to understand other perspectives.
- Watch your body language. Speak up, speak clearly (no mumbling), have an upright but relaxed posture, and make eye contact.

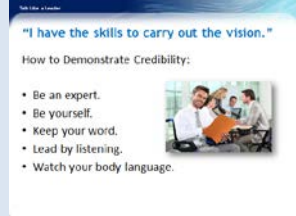
#### Group Activity: Body Language Practice

*Instructions:* Take turns making a brief statement, such as “I have some exciting news to share with you.” First, speak in a monotone, with little eye contact and subdued or closed body language (such as crossed arms). Then repeat the statement, this time with vocal variety and using animated gestures. As the speaker, notice how the two statements feel. As the listener, notice the difference in your reaction to each statement.

#### Instructor Notes



10 minutes



“Self-assurance is a key quality to have as a leader. It’s not enough to merely have confidence in yourself and your abilities—you need to make sure that this confidence comes through in your actions and behaviors.”

Review the opening paragraph.

Review “How to Demonstrate Credibility.”



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants 5 minutes to practice in small groups.

<sup>7</sup> Barrett, Deborah J., “Leadership Communication,” 385–390.

## 2.4 Be Accountable

### Key Communication Phrase 6: “That was my fault, and I accept full responsibility.”

- Acknowledge the consequences.
- Listen to concerns and reactions.
- Determine/identify what needs to change.
- Commit to solving/resolving/preventing/fixing the issue.

#### Individual Activity: Accountability Self-Assessment

*Instructions:* Rate each statement according to how often you practice the behavior described. Use the following scale: 1 = never, 2 = occasionally, 3 = usually, 4 = always

Accountability Statement	Rating
1. I take ownership of my problems and circumstances.	1 2 3 4
2. I proactively seek to improve my performance.	1 2 3 4
3. If I don't know something, I take initiative to find it out.	1 2 3 4
4. I analyze my performance and ask, “What else could I have done?”	1 2 3 4
5. When I make a mistake, I admit it.	1 2 3 4
6. I model accountability for those I work with.	1 2 3 4
7. I confront others when they demonstrate a lack of accountability.	1 2 3 4

Scoring:

7–12 = You lack the skills or motivation to be accountable.

13–18 = You need to continue to look for ways to be more accountable.

19–24 = Keep up the good work.

25–28 = You are a role model for demonstrating accountability.

*(continued on the next page)*

#### Instructor Notes



15 minutes

**Be Accountable**

*“That was my fault, and I accept full responsibility.”*

- Acknowledge consequences.
- Listen to concerns and reactions.
- Determine what needs to change.
- Commit to resolving the issue.





“One of the most important aspects of competence is being accountable.”

Review “Key Communication Phrase 6.”



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants a couple of minutes to complete the self-assessment.

*(continued on the next page)*

## 2.5 Be Probing

Though it might seem counterintuitive, one of the best ways you can demonstrate your competence is by asking questions, specifically, probing questions.

### Key Communication Phrase 7: “Is there a better way? Why? How?”

Use these techniques to improve your ability to ask probing questions.

#### Clarification

Seek details or clear up vague language. This includes asking for examples.

- “What exactly did you mean by...”
- “When, specifically, will you...”
- “What else can you tell me about that?”
- “Can you give me an example of that?”

#### Accuracy and Completeness

Check information to ensure it is correct and complete.

- “What are we missing?”
- “How do you know this is true?”
- “Is there anything you want to add?”
- “How does that compare to what we know?”

#### Future Focus

Think about the consequences of decisions and how to achieve the best possible outcome.

- “What are the pros and cons of this decision/choice?”
- “How will we know if this is successful?”
- “What obstacles could prevent us from achieving our vision?”

#### Instructor Notes



15 minutes



Review the opening paragraph.

Review “Key Communication Phrase 7.”

Review “Clarification.”

Review “Accuracy and Completeness.”

Review “Future Focus.”

## 3.2 Be Caring

Employees spend a lot of time at work. Effective leaders recognize that and notice when individuals have personal circumstances that require special attention and care.

### Key Communication Phrase 8: “How are you?”

#### Individual Activity: Who Cares About You?

*Instructions:* Does your manager, or someone at work, care about you as a person? How can you tell? Use the space provided to record your answer.

### How to Show You Care

- Be available. Yes, you must close your door at times, but you also must keep it open a lot!
- The best way to show you care is to listen. Let others talk more than you. Follow the 80/20 rule—when meeting with employees, encourage them to talk 80 percent of the time, and limit yourself to talking 20 percent of the time.

### Examples of How to Show You Care

- Executives at a company provided meals for an employee whose wife was facing medical issues.<sup>9</sup>
- Roberto Daniel, VP of engineering at Invensys Controls South America, spends one-on-one time with each person he manages. During this time, employees are encouraged to talk about personal interests, family, hobbies, etc. and discouraged from talking “shop” (work-related matters). Daniel reports that it has made a huge difference in the productivity and engagement of the team.<sup>10</sup>

*“Having a personality of caring about people is important. You can’t be a good leader unless you generally like people. That is how you bring out the best in them.”*

—Richard Branson

<sup>9</sup> *Project Management Insitutie*; “Show Your Team You Care—and not Just About Deadlines,” blog entry by Judy Umlas, March 25, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Judy Umlas, “Show Your Team You Care.”

#### Instructor Notes



10 minutes



Review the opening paragraph.

Remind participants that they should take a balanced approach when being attentive to their employees’ personal circumstances. Intruding too much on their personal life can create a dysfunctional work environment.



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants a few minutes to respond individually.

Debrief by asking participants to share their answers.

Review “How to Show You Care.”

Review “Examples of How to Appropriately Show You Care.”

## 3.5 Be Humble

An important way to build a relationship is to be humble. Have the vulnerability to admit that you don't know it all. People will respect you more, not less.

### Key Communication Phrase 11: "I don't know."

- Invite input. For example, add: "What do you think?"
- Realize that you don't have to impress others with your knowledge. Don't talk about what you know. Instead, show your knowledge through your decisions and actions.
- Don't be intimidated by others. If someone mentions something you are unfamiliar with, you don't have to pretend you know what they're talking about. Instead admit your unfamiliarity with the topic and ask them to elaborate so that you may better address the topic.
- Let the other person know what steps you'll take to find out the information you don't know and then follow through.

### How to Think on Your Feet

Sometimes, you're faced with a situation where you have to think on your feet. Although it's okay to admit what you don't know, you also want to be able to share what you do know in a confident manner.

- Take a moment and find one main point you want to make.
- Acknowledge what you don't know.
- Make a plan for how to find out what you don't know.
- Use improvisation techniques to gain confidence:
  - "Yes, and..." Essentially, repeat what the other person said and add something new.
  - Go with your gut. Practice speaking without self-editing. Start with less important issues; say the first thing that comes to mind without worrying about the "right" response.
  - Acknowledge the efforts of others. Not only does it deflect attention away from what you don't know, it boosts the confidence and credibility of your employees and colleagues.

#### Instructor Notes



5 minutes



Review the opening paragraph.

"You don't always have to have the answers as a leader, and you'll only be hurting yourself and your employees by pretending that you do. Deal with uncertainties by implementing these techniques."

Review "Key Communication Phrase 11."

Review "How to Think on Your Feet."



## 4.3 Be Appreciative

### Key Communication Phrase 13: “You’re doing a great job. You are making a difference.”

Research by Ken Blanchard confirmed what many other studies have found: Employees need a ratio of four instances of praise to every one instance of criticism in order to feel they have a positive relationship with their boss.<sup>13</sup>

#### How to Praise Employees

- Don’t wait. Recognize employees for what they’ve done as soon as you can following the event.
- Be sincere. Tone of voice and body language reveal your level of enthusiasm.
- Praise them for something specific. This shows that you’re paying attention, not just “paying lip service.”
- Catch them doing something right. Proactively look for employees’ successes. You want to praise every employee, not just your star performers.
- Reward/recognize employees in a way that is meaningful to them, for example, by providing tickets to a concert by their favorite performer. (This requires you to know who their favorite performer is!)
- Have fun together! Celebrate group accomplishments.

#### Group Activity: Alphabet Brainstorm

*Instructions:* Work in small groups. Starting with the letter A (or starting with Z and working backwards), write down a word that describes how you can show your employees that you appreciate them, for each letter of the alphabet. See how far you can get in 10 minutes. Note: Sentences do not have to begin with the specific word.

#### Instructor Notes



15 minutes



“Encouraging employees gives them motivation to work harder and establishes a positive working environment. We all need a pat on the back every now and again.

Review “Key Communication Phrase 13.”

Review “How to Praise Employees.”



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants 10 minutes to brainstorm in small groups.

Debrief by asking groups to share their answers with the class. Consider awarding a fun prize for the most ideas or the most unusual idea.

Participants will formulate their answers in a variety of ways; here are some suggestions.

A: Acknowledge them in public.

B: Buy them lunch.

C: Offer them coffee cards or a coffee bar.

D: Allow them to bring their dogs to work.

E: Education—reimburse them for taking work-related classes.

F: Offer them flex time.

Note: If you do a search on the Internet, you will find many ideas for how to show appreciation. This is just one list:

<http://www.slu.edu/human-resources-home/recognition/50-ways-to-show-appreciation>

<sup>13</sup> *How We Lead: Conversations with Ken Blanchard*; “Praise v. Criticism,” blog entry by Ken, July 13, 2010

## 4.4 Be Constructive

One of your most important responsibilities as a leader is delivering constructive feedback to your employees. When done effectively, you can nurture employees' professional development, increasing their skills while making them more valuable to the organization. Follow some simple guidelines to make it effective and appreciated.

### Key Communication Phrase 14: "I have some feedback for you."

- Be specific.
  - Ineffective (vague): "The presentation was boring."
  - Effective (specific): "Let's talk about some ways you can make your presentation grab listeners' attention."
- Provide observations, not interpretations.
  - Ineffective: "Your slides looked like you didn't put any work into them."
  - Effective: "Slides provide more interest when you choose one eye-catching image rather than display lots of words or data."
- Tell them what they should do, not merely what they shouldn't do.
  - Ineffective: "Don't face your slides when you give your presentation."
  - Effective: "Face your audience and make eye contact when you give your presentation."
- Avoid the word "but."
  - Ineffective: "You have lots of great ideas, but your habit of interrupting irritates people and makes them not want to listen to you."
  - Effective: "You have lots of great ideas, and they would be even better received if you waited to share them until others have finished speaking."

#### Group Activity: Rephrasing Feedback

*Instructions:* Rephrase each statement to follow the guidelines for giving constructive feedback.

1. "Pamela, you're too shy."
2. "George, you're a great manager, but you have to quit micromanaging me."
3. "Liz, you're not a team player. You need to contribute more to the team."

#### Instructor Notes



15 minutes



Review the opening paragraph.

Review "Key Communication Phrase 14."



Activity: Review the instructions. Allow participants 5 minutes to respond with a partner.

Debrief by asking pairs to share their answers with the class. Ask them to first explain why the original sentence was ineffective.

Participants will formulate their answers in a variety of ways; however, here are some suggestions:

1. Ineffective: vague, interpretation, doesn't suggest what to do instead.

Effective: "Pamela, if you make eye contact and be the first to say hello, you can develop rapport with someone more easily."

2. Ineffective: vague, doesn't say what to do instead, uses "but."

Effective: "George, I value your input on projects, and I think I can grow even more as an employee if you allow me to make more decisions along the way."

3. Ineffective: vague, interpretation.

Effective: "Liz, I noticed you haven't volunteered to work on any team projects at the last two meetings. Help me understand your reason for that."

## Test Your Knowledge

1. What are the four main messages that are important for leaders to communicate?
2. Which of the following is NOT a way to make your communication more inspiring?
  - a. Show passion and enthusiasm for your vision.
  - b. Use inclusive phrases such as “we, us, together.”
  - c. Don’t say too much so that employees can find their own sources of motivation.
  - d. Describe success in terms of how it will benefit employees.
3. If you have to say no to someone, you should provide a lengthy explanation to make sure they agree with your decision.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Which of the following statements follows the guidelines for being direct?
  - a. “Please meet with HR and discuss options for streamlining the hiring process for temp workers.”
  - b. “Don’t you think the process for hiring temp workers is cumbersome?”
  - c. “You’re wrong.”
  - d. “Quit interrupting other people during our team meetings.”
5. Which of the following is NOT a technique to ask probing questions?
  - a. Clarification
  - b. Assigning blame
  - c. Accuracy and completeness
  - d. Future focus

*(continued on the next page)*

### Instructor Notes



10 minutes



As a final activity, ask participants to complete the “Test Your Knowledge” section individually.

Debrief by reviewing the answers as a group.

#### Answer Key

1. 1) I have a vision for the organization. 2) I have the skills to carry out that vision. 3) I know and care about you. 4) I want to help you be the best you can be.

2. c

3. b

4. a

5. b

*(continued on the next page)*

## What our Clients Say about the Reproducible Training Library

“I have used many of the *Reproducible Training* programs and I can't say enough good things about them. The content is easy to tailor—I've even combined programs to meet my clients' specific needs. Not only am I able to provide my clients with a professionally developed, customized program at a reasonable price, but I've saved myself a lot of time and frustration, too. I plan to buy more programs in the future. I highly recommend them!”

Rosemary C. Rulka, MS, SPHR  
President  
R.C. Rulka Consulting, LLC

“We chose the *Reproducible Training Library* for the open-source format and customizable materials. The programs are well structured and rich with content. Preparation to delivery was less than 2 hours, and the addition of our company themes make the materials look like they were designed in house.”

James T. Puett  
Manager, Leadership and Organizational Development  
Healthways Human Resources

## Delivering high-quality, customized training has never been simpler.

The *Reproducible Training Library* is your comprehensive source for soft-skills content that's downloadable, customizable, reproducible, and affordable. From communication and leadership to team building, negotiating, and more, our experts have done the development work for you. Whether you use the materials “right out of the box” or tailor the content to your needs—download to delivery takes just a few clicks.

### Features and Benefits

- *Instant Access:* Your program is available to you for immediate download.
- *Quality Content:* Top-notch development enables you to deliver a rich program.
- *Ability to Customize:* Make the program yours, or use it “right out of the box.”
- *Unlimited Use:* Reprint the materials as much as you like, as often as you like.

### Get Started Today!

### Have questions?

Contact us at [office@dekon.biz](mailto:office@dekon.biz)