



Profile 6: Proficient Manager

Development Insights Report

REPORT DATE

3 July 2026

Morgan Ellis

GRADE | SCORE RANGE

B | Mid (164–191)

Mid-Level (ML): Low (150–163) → Mid (164–191) → High (192–275)

SECTION A — YOUR ASSESSMENT SCORES



OVERALL SCORE

TOTAL SCORE

178 / 275

This report explains your scores, what your profile means, and how to develop your communication. Use it as a structured development tool, not as a final judgement of your capability.

DOMAIN 1

Nonverbal Communication & Interpersonal Skills



DOMAIN 2

Verbal Communication (Public Speaking & Presentation Skills)



DOMAIN 3

Business Writing (Memos, Emails, Reports, Letters, Proposals, Etc.)



DOMAIN 4

Leadership Communication & Influence



SECTION B — PROFILE 6: PROFICIENT MANAGER

Score Range

164–191

Benchmark Status

At Benchmark (B band)

Global Readiness

Senior Development

Global Differentiators

5, 23, 30, 49

Additional Focus Area

40

SNAPSHOT

Begins to understand audience engagement; applies structured messaging to achieve clarity in broader contexts.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

- Applies message frameworks effectively
- Starts demonstrating audience awareness
- Adjusts approach with moderate confidence in unfamiliar settings

Business Relevance

Contributes reliably in cross-team and regional initiatives; builds credibility with peers and managers.

Success Indicators

- Clear communication in meetings and presentations
- Positive feedback from regional stakeholders

Risks & Mitigation

- Risk:** Over-reliance on familiar methods
- Mitigation:** Encourage experimentation in low-risk settings

Manager Guidance & Team Impact

- Provide opportunities to present regionally
- Encourage mentoring and cross-cultural practice
- Inspires team through example

Development Pathway

Timeline	Milestone
3 months	Apply structured frameworks in team meetings
6 months	Lead small projects with cross-functional teams

12 months

Demonstrate consistency in mixed-audience communications

Navigating Your Development Insights (Section C)

The section below provides development guidance for your assessed communication domains. Depending on your scores, some domains may require more attention than others. Whilst it is sensible to prioritise focus areas, reading insights across all domains will reveal how they reinforce each other to strengthen your overall influence.

SECTION C — DEVELOPMENT INSIGHTS

PROFILE OVERVIEW

2. Overview

This profile is based on your validated assessment results from the Global 4-Domain Communication Skills Rating Tool™.

You've developed above-average communication skills across all four domains. These skills complement your technical and functional expertise. At this level, communication becomes a tool to build credibility, visibility, and influence across your organisation. You're positioned for higher leadership roles. Your communication competence must now demonstrate readiness for high-stakes projects and executive pathways.

You lead your team well. Now you need to influence beyond your team. This means working across functions, across cultures, and with senior leaders. You're building a reputation as someone who gets results not just through technical excellence, but through the ability to align diverse stakeholders, handle complex organisational challenges, and communicate confidently.

At this stage, your effectiveness is increasingly judged by organisational influence rather than team performance alone.

MID-LEVEL COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT SPECTRUM

Strengthening Consistency



Broadening Impact



Sustaining Effectiveness

*Your current position*

This spectrum shows how communication capability typically strengthens at the mid-level, as communication skills are refined and applied across broader contexts.

3. WHY THIS MATTERS (BUSINESS IMPACT)

3. Why This Matters (Business Impact)

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Strong technical performance alone is no longer enough. At this level, the gap between a competent manager and an influential leader becomes visible to senior leadership. This directly affects your access to strategic opportunities.

Gaps at this stage can limit career progression. Unclear communication across stakeholder groups, weak persuasion in executive settings, or cultural insensitivity can lead to stalled promotions, eroded cross-functional trust, or missed sponsorship opportunities with executives. Although you continue to manage your current team well, you may not be considered for senior roles.

Strong communication competence opens specific doors. You'll lead high-visibility projects. You'll gain executive sponsorship for advancement. You'll be positioned as a credible candidate for director-level or senior leadership roles.

This profile describes how your communication is likely to manifest in your current role. The examples in this report reflect typical behaviours at this level. Use them to consider where you're already strong and where small changes will improve your overall impact.

4. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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4. General Recommendations

- Treat communication as a core leadership capability; this is what sets you apart from technical experts who lack influence.
- Use the ABF Formula™, the Three Rules of Business Writing™, and the Flexible Communications Strategy™ in high-stakes situations; these are the contexts where organisational outcomes depend on getting everyone aligned.
- Demonstrate thought leadership presence both within and outside your organisation, establishing your reputation beyond your immediate function.
- Use cultural intelligence intentionally to increase your effectiveness across diverse global stakeholder groups.
- Seek executive visibility through strategic communication opportunities, not just technical contributions.

5. FRAMEWORK FOUNDATIONS

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These frameworks underpin the development guidance in this report. You will see them referenced throughout. Familiarise yourself with all three now.

ABF Formula™

Source: *Influence and Thrive*, Chapter 8

- **Audience:** Research your stakeholders' priorities and preferences.
- **Beacons:** Keep communication simple, brief, and clear (with a specific call to action).
- **Feedback:** Request and give timely, factual feedback within 24 hours.

Key principle: Audience and Beacons adapt to culture; Feedback stays universal.

Three Rules of Business Writing™

Source: *Influence and Thrive*, Chapter 17

- **1. Audience:** Address your recipient's needs, considering cultural protocols.
- **2. Beacons:** Prioritise simplicity, brevity, and clarity, whilst respecting cultural formality expectations.
- **3. Proofread and edit twice** — Apply first for flow and cultural appropriateness, and second for grammatical precision.

Key principle: Audience-focused content requires cultural adaptation — persistent errors destroy credibility.

Flexible Communications Strategy™

Source: *Influence and Thrive*, Chapter 28

- **'The What'** (initiative details)
- **'The Why'** (business rationale)
- **'The Who'** (stakeholders and responsibilities)
- **'The How'** (implementation approach)
- **'The When/How Long'** (timeline with milestones)
- **'The Crisis-Mode Plan'** (risks and contingencies)

Key principle: All six components should be integrated into the messaging. 'The How' and 'The When/How Long' adapt to cultural protocols. 'The Crisis-Mode Plan' requires culturally specific messaging.

6. CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

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6. Cultural Intelligence

Apply these regional patterns consistently across all domains. Adapt your nonverbal presence, verbal delivery, writing style, and leadership approach to align with your stakeholders' cultural context.

CULTURAL CLUSTER	KEY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS
Hierarchical Respect (Greece, South Korea, Turkey, Serbia, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya)	Show respect to superiors through formal posture, controlled expressions, and verbal and written communication, whilst being direct with subordinates. Use proper titles always. This 'Kiss Up/Kick Down' style is tolerated.
Consensus-Building (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia)	Be approachable and inclusive. Use the förankring process (multiple meetings for the Nordic region). Be patient with decision timelines. Use the synchronised style (Southeast Asia/Latin America).
Ubuntu (South Africa) & Relational (Mexico, Chile)	Demonstrate warm, inclusive gestures. Balance authority with humanity. Use transformational communication (consultative, empowering, participative). Emphasise collective success.
Plain Speaking & Clarity (Netherlands, Germany, USA)	Communicate directly and logically. Be concise. Dutch 'bespreekbaarheid' (directness) is valued. Precision shows competence.
Formal (UAE, Singapore) & Eloquent (Saudi Arabia)	Maintain a formal, dignified tone. Acknowledge hierarchy. Use elegant rhetoric over brevity (Saudi Arabia). Adopt high-context communication that requires analysing the whole situation for hidden meanings.
Diplomatic Connection (Australia, New Zealand, UK)	Keep tone polite and agreeable (especially in New Zealand). Always watch for reactions. Balance directness with politeness; confrontation is handled delicately (UK).

7. DOMAIN DEVELOPMENT

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7. Domain Development

BEFORE YOU BEGIN — SELF-RATING

Before you read each domain below, rate yourself honestly.

For each domain, mark yourself 1–5: (1 = this is a noticeable weakness; 5 = this is an evident strength).

Write your ratings down with today's date. Return to them after 90 days to see what has shifted.

Domain 1 — Nonverbal Communication & Interpersonal Skills: ____ / 5

Domain 2 — Verbal Communication & Public Speaking: ____ / 5

Domain 3 — Business Writing: ____ / 5

Domain 4 — Leadership Communication & Influence: ____ / 5

Domain 1: Nonverbal Communication & Interpersonal Skills

Focus: Build executive presence through deliberate nonverbal control

BEFORE

Your body language works well with your direct team but becomes inconsistent in cross-functional settings or when presenting to senior leaders. You might fidget when challenged by executives. You might use the same casual style with both Nigerian senior leaders and Swedish peers.

AFTER

Your presence signals executive readiness across contexts. You stay composed when challenged by senior leaders. You adapt your nonverbal cues properly across Greek hierarchical meetings and Danish collaborative sessions. You demonstrate confidence without appearing domineering in cross-functional settings.

NOTICE

Senior leaders comment that you ‘handle pressure well’ or ‘project confidence’. Cross-functional peers invite you to lead initiatives without you having to ask. Stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds appreciate your ‘cultural awareness’ and ‘respectful approach’.

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE — ADAPTING NONVERBAL PRESENCE ACROSS REGIONS

Apply these regional patterns consistently across all domains. Adapt your nonverbal presence, verbal delivery, writing style, and leadership approach to align with your stakeholders’ cultural context.

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LOW (150–163): PROJECTING CONFIDENCE IN CROSS-FUNCTIONAL SETTINGS

Master cross-functional meeting leadership through deliberate nonverbal control.

Enter the room confidently. Walk with purpose, not rushed. Greet senior stakeholders first, then peers. This signals hierarchy awareness. When presenting, use controlled gestures at navel height. Maintain a calm facial expression when being questioned.

Use cultural adaptations from the Cultural Intelligence section. For Greek, Turkish, Serbian, Nigerian, or Ghanaian stakeholders, show respect through formal posture and stay confident with peers. For Swedish, Norwegian, or Danish stakeholders, use open, inclusive body language and be patient through extended discussions. For Mexican or Chilean stakeholders, balance professionalism with warm, approachable nonverbal cues. For South African stakeholders, use Ubuntu principles by offering warm, respectful greetings and showing genuine concern.

Your Practice (3 months): Over the next three months, document your cross-functional presence weekly. Which stakeholders engaged positively? Which remained distant? Did your nonverbal presence signal peer-level credibility? What cultural adjustments worked?

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Receive unsolicited invitations to contribute in cross-functional settings. This development shows stakeholders see you as a team leader.

MID (164–191): READING EXECUTIVE-LEVEL DYNAMICS

Use the SCAN system from *Influence and Thrive* (Chapter 4) to interpret audience cues in executive meetings. SCAN stands for Suspend judgement, consider Context, Ask questions, and Note new judgement. This supports the 'Audience' component of your ABF Formula™. It helps you read stakeholder reactions accurately, allowing you to adjust your approach accordingly.

When you notice nonverbal cues in executive settings, suspend your initial judgement. Consider the context. Is this the executive's typical style? Is there external pressure affecting their response? What cultural factors might explain this reaction? Ask a clarifying question to test your reading. Note your revised judgement and adjust.

Your Practice (3 months):

Use SCAN in at least three executive-level interactions. Document the nonverbal cues that initially concerned you. Write the context you considered. Record the clarifying question you asked. Note how this improved your audience's understanding.

Success Indicator (12 weeks):

Within 12 weeks, successfully use SCAN in at least three executive interactions. Maintain composure rather than reacting defensively.

HIGH (192–275): MAINTAINING EXECUTIVE COMPOSURE IN HIGH-PRESSURE SITUATIONS

Stay composed when publicly challenged or managing cultural tensions.

When a senior executive challenges your recommendation, remain still for 4 seconds; this move signals thought, not panic. Keep eye contact and use an open posture. Respond with: 'That's important context. The key difference now is [specific changed condition]. Here's why that changes the outcome...'

When managing cultural tension (Nordic stakeholders wanting consensus-building time versus US stakeholders wanting immediate decisions), stay calm and steady. Look at both groups with equal respect. Say: 'I appreciate both perspectives. Here's how we'll honour both needs. We'll take two weeks for thorough analysis (respecting the Nordic förankring process). Then we'll decide in our next meeting (providing US stakeholders with a clear timeline). This ensures quality whilst maintaining momentum.'

Your Practice (3 months): Over three months, identify and handle two high-pressure situations. These could be an executive presentation where challenges are likely, a cultural tension requiring diplomatic resolution, or a crisis requiring decisive communication. Before each, mentally rehearse your nonverbal strategy. After each, ask an observer: ‘On a scale of 1–5, how composed did I appear under pressure?’

Success Indicator: Within 12 weeks, receive feedback from at least one senior executive that you ‘handle pressure well’ or ‘maintained composure in a difficult situation’.

COACHING INSIGHT

Executive presence isn’t about perfection. It’s about composure under pressure and cultural adaptability. Your ability to stay calm when challenged, combined with sensitivity to cultural norms, signals readiness for broader organisational leadership.

DOMAIN 2 – VERBAL COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Domain 2: Verbal Communication (Public Speaking & Presentations)

Focus: Shift from informing to influencing at scale

BEFORE	AFTER	NOTICE
Your presentations are clear and well-structured for your team. However, you struggle to engage diverse stakeholder groups. When presenting to the CFO, CTO, COO, and Head of Sales together, some stakeholders disengage. This is because you haven’t addressed their specific priorities. Your impromptu responses to executive questions lack structure under pressure.	You address multiple stakeholders’ needs in a single presentation. Finance hears the cost impact. Operations hears efficiency gains. Sales hears revenue implications. All groups stay engaged. When executives ask unexpected questions, you respond with clarity. Your presentations persuade, not just inform.	After presentations, stakeholders from various functions often say, ‘You clearly understood what matters to us’. You’re increasingly invited to present at strategic initiatives. Executives ask you to represent your department in high-stakes meetings.

LOW (150–163): MASTERING COMPLEX STAKEHOLDER PRESENTATIONS

Use the STAR model (Situation, Trouble, Action, Result) from *Influence and Thrive* (Chapter 9) to address multiple stakeholder groups at the same time. STAR supports the ‘Beacons’ component of the ABF Formula™. It ensures your message structure is simple, brief, and clear for diverse audiences.

Structure presentations to address each stakeholder clearly:

Situation (acknowledge all stakeholder contexts): ‘Operations processes 5,000 orders daily. Finance tracks costs manually. Sales lacks real-time inventory visibility. IT maintains three separate legacy systems’.

Trouble (show impact on each stakeholder): ‘Finance faces a 15% cost discrepancy (\$200,000 annual difference). Operations experiences 48-hour processing delays, risking violations of service level agreements. Sales can’t answer 40% of enquiries immediately, losing deals to competitors that respond faster. IT spends 60% of maintenance time on three systems, preventing strategic projects’.

Action (show how solution addresses each): Implement an integrated system that provides Finance with automated cost tracking, Operations with 12-hour processing, Sales with a real-time inventory dashboard, and IT with single-platform consolidation.

Result (quantify outcomes): Finance eliminates the \$200,000 discrepancy. Operations achieve 75% faster processing. Sales increase quote-to-close speed by 25% (\$500,000 incremental revenue). IT frees 40% capacity for innovation.

Use cultural adaptations:

- For Latin American stakeholders (Mexico, Brazil, Colombia), use relational storytelling with emotional resonance.
- For Sub-Saharan African stakeholders (Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya), balance storytelling with hierarchical, formal structures.
- For Dutch or German stakeholders, prioritise directness and logical flow. For Saudi Arabian stakeholders, use eloquent rhetoric to convey points indirectly and effectively.

Your Practice (3 months): Over three months, deliver three presentations addressing multiple stakeholder groups. Before listing each stakeholder group, outline what each cares about. After each, ask the representatives: 'On a scale of 1–5, how well did this address your function's priorities?'

Success Indicator (12 weeks): After three presentations, achieve $\geq 4/5$ effectiveness from at least 75% of diverse stakeholders.

MID (164–191): MASTERING EXECUTIVE-LEVEL IMPROMPTU COMMUNICATION

Use the PREP model (Point, Reason, Example, Point) from *Influence and Thrive* (Chapter 13) in Q&A and when facing high-stakes, unexpected challenges. PREP provides a quick structure for maintaining ABF Formula™ 'Beacons' (simplicity, brevity, and clarity) under pressure.

When a CEO asks unexpectedly, 'Why should we prioritise your initiative over Johnson's proposal?'

- **Point:** 'We should prioritise my initiative because it addresses our most urgent customer retention risk'.
- **Reason:** 'Customer churn increased 15% last quarter, primarily due to the issue my initiative solves. Johnson's proposal targets acquisition, which matters long-term but doesn't stop the bleeding now'.
- **Example:** 'We lost three enterprise clients last month (\$600,000 annual revenue) who cited the exact problem my initiative fixes. Eight more at-risk clients cite the same issue'.
- **Point:** 'So we should prioritise retention before acquisition. Stop the churn first, then grow'.

Your Practice (3 months): Over the next three months, practise the PREP structure. Have your mentor ask you five difficult executive-level questions each week. Record yourself and review for structure. Volunteer for executive exposure. Attend executive meetings as a subject matter expert. Use PREP deliberately when unexpected questions are asked.

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Within 12 weeks, successfully use PREP in at least three executive impromptu situations. Maintain composure and clarity.

HIGH (192–275): BLENDING STORYTELLING AND DATA FOR EXECUTIVE PERSUASION

Use advanced rhetorical devices to motivate and influence executive audiences. These techniques enhance the ABF Formula™ 'Beacons' by making complex information memorable and persuasive.

Balanced Statement (showing transformation): 'Six months ago, one order took 12 steps, 48 hours, and cost \$45. Today, that same order process in 8 steps takes 4 hours and costs \$8 per transaction. That's 92% faster, 82% cheaper, saving \$37 on every single order — and when measured by processing steps per order, customer satisfaction scores are up 33%'.

Rule of Three (executive decision framework): Present three options with a clear cost, benefit, and risk for each. State your recommendation clearly: ‘My recommendation is Option 3. Here’s why...’

Storytelling with impact: Move beyond ‘Customer satisfaction declined 15%’ to a vivid narrative that shows human stakes whilst tying back to business outcomes.

ABF Formula™ Integration: Research audience priorities and cultural communication preferences (Audience). Ensure speeches are simple, brief, and clear (Beacons). Request feedback within 24 hours: ‘On a scale of 1–5, how persuasive was my recommendation?’ (Feedback).

Your Practice (6 months): Test one device per month during executive presentations. After presenting, ask an executive: ‘What resonated the most?’

Success Indicator: Within six months, achieve $\geq 4.5/5$ persuasiveness ratings from executive audiences across at least four presentations.

COACHING INSIGHT

Effective executive persuasion requires striking a balance between data and narrative, logic and emotion, and directness and cultural sensitivity. Your ability to address competing stakeholder needs whilst maintaining clarity signals strategic thinking, not just technical competence.

DOMAIN 3 – BUSINESS WRITING

Domain 3: Business Writing

Focus: Build a persuasive, strategic written presence

BEFORE

Your reports are technically accurate but require multiple clarification rounds before decisions are made. Stakeholders ask questions that your documents should have answered. Decision timelines are long because your writing informs but doesn’t persuade. Your memos work for US colleagues but create friction with Nigerian or Brazilian stakeholders due to tone mismatches.

AFTER

Your reports answer questions before they’re asked. Stakeholders review your documents and say, ‘They are complete.’ Decisions occur more quickly because all the necessary information is readily available, culturally relevant, and effectively presented. Your writing drives action across diverse cultural contexts.

NOTICE

Senior stakeholders request that you submit proposals for important projects. Colleagues request to see your reports as templates. Cross-functional partners comment that your documents are ‘clearer than most’ or ‘easy to action’. Cultural misunderstandings in written communication decrease significantly.

REGION	KEY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS
Nigerian, Ghanaian, Kenyan, or UAE recipients	Include a formal greeting that acknowledges the hierarchy. Keep a formal structure whilst being clear. Edit for culturally appropriate tone, proper titles, and grammatical accuracy.
US recipients	Lead with the decision needed or the key action in the first sentence. Be concise. Edit for directness without curttness.
Latin American recipients (Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile)	Add relational context; balance clarity with a warm, professional tone. Edit for grammatical correctness and relationship-building whilst requesting action.
Nordic contexts (Sweden, Norway, Denmark)	Use specificity with collaborative framing: 'To support our shared timeline, let's target completion by 15 March'. Balance professionalism with accessibility.

LOW (150–163): MASTERING THREE RULES OF BUSINESS WRITING™

Use the Three Rules of Business Writing™ from *Influence and Thrive* (Chapter 17) consistently across all stakeholder communications. These rules put your ABF Formula™ into action for written communication.

Three Rules:

- 1. Address the recipient’s needs, not just what you want to say (ABF Formula™: Audience).
- 2. Use simplicity, brevity, and clarity (ABF Formula™: Beacons).
- 3. Edit and proofread thoroughly — twice (for flow and grammatical precision).

Weak approach:

Subject: Project Update — *"The project is progressing well. We're on track!"*

This tells the reader nothing actionable. It addresses what the writer wants to say, not what each stakeholder needs to know or decide.

Strong approach: Three Rules in action

[Rule 1 — Audience] Subject: CRM Migration — Board Approval Required by 15 June | 2 of 3 Milestones Complete

The subject line names the decision, the deadline, and the progress status — addressing what each stakeholder needs before they open the email.

[Rule 1 — Audience] Action required from: Finance Director — Approve \$45,000 resource reallocation. CTO — Confirm Phase 2 technical sign-off. COO — Approve the 1 July go-live date.

[Rule 2 — Beacons: simplicity, brevity, and clarity] Q3 progress: 2 of 3 milestones complete. Data integrity: 99.2% against a 98% target. Budget: \$12,000 under projection.

[Rule 1 — Audience | Rule 2 — Beacons] Decision required by 15 June: Approve Phase 2 reallocation to protect the 1 July go-live. Delay beyond 15 June risks a six-week extension and \$80,000 in additional costs.

[Rule 2 — Beacons] Decision timeline: 8 June — draft circulated. 12 June — stakeholder Q&A. 15 June — final approval.

[Rule 3 — Edit and proofread twice] The full memo has been reviewed once for flow and once for grammatical precision, ensuring nothing undermines the clarity of the message.

Your Practice (3 months): Use the Three Rules for every significant document. Track baseline clarification requests per document. Target a 40% reduction after 12 weeks.

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Receive positive feedback from at least two stakeholders commenting on the clarity or completeness of your documentation.

MID (164–191): ELIMINATING AMBIGUITY THROUGH RADICAL SPECIFICITY

Use specificity principles from the Rethinking Business Communications Blog: *Two Potent Ways Specificity Transforms Your Communication And Drives Results*. Specificity enhances ABF Formula™ ‘Beacons’ by ensuring every word counts and prevents misinterpretation.

Replace vague language with specific alternatives. Instead of ‘soon’, write ‘by Friday, 10 March at 3 p.m.’ Instead of ‘several clients’, write ‘three enterprise clients (\$600,000 revenue)’. Instead of ‘significant improvement’, write ‘30% faster response time and \$150,000 cost reduction’. Instead of ‘better processes’, write ‘automated ticket routing with a 4-hour service level agreement’. Instead of ‘the team is working on it’, write ‘Sarah leads implementation; James handles training’.

Use cultural adaptations:

- For Nordic contexts (Sweden, Norway, Denmark), use specificity with collaborative framing: ‘To support our shared timeline, let’s target completion by 15 March’.
- For Latin American contexts (Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Chile), add relational warmth: ‘We truly value our partnership, and we’ll make sure you have our full response within six hours’.
- For German/Dutch contexts, use direct specificity: ‘Cost: \$45,000. Timeline: 15 March. Risk: Low’. No softening needed. Precision shows competence.

Your Practice (2 months): Conduct weekly audits. Every Friday, review three significant documents you sent. Highlight vague words. Rewrite with specific alternatives.

Success Indicator (8 weeks): Within eight weeks, stakeholders spontaneously comment that your updates are ‘easy to implement’. Track 40% reduction in clarification requests.

HIGH (192–275): APPLYING THE FLEXIBLE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY™

Use the Flexible Communications Strategy™ from *Influence and Thrive* (Chapter 28) for business proposals and strategic reports that require cross-functional alignment.

Six Components:

1. ‘The What’ (initiative details)
2. ‘The Why’ (business rationale)
3. ‘The Who’ (stakeholders and responsibilities)
4. ‘The How’ (implementation approach)
5. ‘The When/How Long’ (timeline with milestones)

6. 'The Crisis-Mode Plan' (risks and contingencies)

Weak approach:

We should implement a new customer tracking system. It will help sales. Cost is \$500,000. Timeline is 12 months.

Strong approach:

The executive summary effectively addresses all six components within three concise paragraphs. Then, the detailed sections follow. 'The What' introduces the initiative. 'The Why' explains the urgency and calculates the ROI. 'The Who' identifies the executive sponsors and the implementation team using the RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, informed) matrix clarity. 'The How' outlines phased rollout. 'The When/How Long' provides major milestones with dates. And 'The Crisis-Mode Plan' identifies risks with likelihood, impact, mitigation strategy, and contingency plans.

Use cultural adaptations:

For hierarchical cultures, list senior stakeholders first for the 'Who' section. For Nordic cultures, allow longer timelines in the 'When/How Long' section for the förankring process. For cultures that expect directives on actions (e.g., the Netherlands and Germany), expand the 'Crisis-Mode Plan' section.

Your Practice (3 months): Over three months, use the Flexible Communications Strategy™ for two to three primary documents. Create a template with six headings. Fill each section before writing prose. Test completeness. Give the draft to a colleague unfamiliar with the project. Can they answer all six questions?

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Senior stakeholders comment that your proposals are 'complete' or 'thought-through'. The acceptance rate increases by 30–50%.

THREE RULES OF BUSINESS WRITING™ INTEGRATION

Write with the reader in mind, considering cultural preferences (Audience). Prioritise simplicity, brevity, and clarity, whilst respecting cultural formality expectations (Beacons). Track responses. How quickly are documents approved? How many clarification requests? (Feedback).

COACHING INSIGHT

Strategic writing doesn't just communicate decisions; it also shapes them. Your documents should make the decision easy for stakeholders by addressing all concerns, honouring cultural expectations, and presenting information clearly and comprehensively.

DOMAIN 4 — LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION & INFLUENCE

Domain 4: Leadership Communication & Influence

Focus: Build credibility through culturally appropriate leadership presence

BEFORE

You communicate well about your work but struggle when influencing without formal authority. Your leadership language feels inconsistent (sometimes directive, sometimes consultative) without a clear reason. Cross-cultural initiatives can create friction when you use a single communication style for all stakeholders. Your ‘I’ versus ‘We’ language usage is unbalanced, either appearing too authoritarian or not accountable.

AFTER

You communicate on behalf of your team. You influence without formal authority. You build coalitions across cultural contexts. You flexibly shift between directive and consultative styles based on situation, urgency, and cultural context. Cross-cultural stakeholders feel respected and engaged. Your inclusive language builds psychological safety whilst maintaining clear accountability.

NOTICE

Team members spontaneously use ‘We’ language when discussing shared initiatives. Cross-functional peers comment that you ‘read situations well’ or adapt your approach effectively. Stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds appreciate that you honour their way of working whilst driving results. Senior leaders invite you to lead cross-cultural initiatives.

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE – LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION ACROSS REGIONS

REGION	KEY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS
Nordic contexts (Sweden, Norway, Denmark)	the ‘We’ language is essential and signals collaborative leadership competence. The ‘I’ language signals an autocratic style. Multiple meetings for consensus (förankring) are expected.
Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia)	‘We’ language builds relational trust and collaboration. Use diplomatic, team-oriented language that emphasises collective success and a synchronised approach.
Hierarchical cultures (Nigeria, Greece, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, UAE)	Conduct private briefings with senior stakeholders before group meetings. Use formal tone and proper titles. Seek their endorsement. Directive communication is expected when crises arise.
South Africa, Kenya	Balance hierarchical respect with participative language. Ubuntu values (humanity, empathy, and care) signal inclusive leadership. Collective success is key.

LOW (150–163): LEADING WITH INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Use inclusive language (‘We’, ‘Us’, ‘Let’s’) strategically to build psychological safety whilst keeping clear accountability.

Use ‘I’ for:

- Taking accountability for difficult decisions: ‘I made the call to delay the launch, and I take full responsibility’.
- Shielding your team from criticism: ‘The missed deadline is my failure in project planning, not the team’s execution’.

Use ‘We’ for:

- Celebrating success: ‘We exceeded target by 30% — this team’s persistence made it happen’.
- Facing challenges together: ‘We’re behind schedule. Let’s solve the problem together. What’s blocking us?’

- Inviting cross-functional collaboration: 'Let's align our timelines so both teams succeed'.

Use cultural adaptations:

- In Nordic contexts (Sweden, Norway, Denmark), the 'We' language is essential and signals collaborative leadership competence; the 'I' language signals an autocratic style.
- For US/Canadian contexts, balance 'We' (team orientation) with 'I' (personal accountability) to prevent diffusion of responsibility.
- For Latin American contexts, 'We' language builds relational trust and collaboration.
- In the South African context, 'We' signals Ubuntu values (humanity, empathy, and care).
- For the Kenyan context, balance hierarchical respect with participative language.

Your Practice (3 months): Review 10 recent team communications. Count 'I' versus 'We' statements. Target ratio: 70% 'We', 30% 'I'. Each week, review three communications and rewrite 'I' statements as 'We' where appropriate.

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Team members and cross-functional peers spontaneously use 'we' language when discussing shared initiatives.

MID (164–191): ADAPTING LEADERSHIP STYLE BETWEEN DIRECTIVE AND CONSULTATIVE

Adapt communication style between directive (when needed) and consultative (when appropriate) based on cultural context and situation urgency.

Use directive leadership when crises require immediate action — safety or compliance issues with zero room for debate, the team that lacks the expertise to contribute meaningfully, or a cultural context that expects clear authority (e.g., Saudi Arabia, UAE, Nigeria, and Ghana). Use consultative leadership when the team has the relevant expertise, when buy-in is critical for successful implementation, or when a cultural context values participation (e.g., Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Kenya, and South Africa).

Crisis directive example: 'Team, we have a client data breach. Here's what's happening and what we're doing immediately: [Specific actions], what you need to do: [Clear assignments with deadlines]. Why this matters: Client trust and regulatory compliance are at stake. Questions? Ask now — we need clarity for execution'.

Strategic consultative example: 'Team, I need your input on our project delivery approach. Here's the context and decision process: [Decision with rationale]. What I need from you: Your expertise on four questions [Specific questions]. Decision process: [Timeline for input, discussion, and final decision]. Why your voice matters: You work with clients daily. Your insights will directly shape this decision'.

Use cultural adaptations:

- For Nordic contexts, allow an extended förankring process (three to four weeks instead of two weeks for decisions). Use language: 'Let's explore this together over the next month' (not 'decide quickly').
- For Latin American and Southeast Asian contexts, use diplomatic, team-oriented language that emphasises collective success and a synchronised approach. Avoid appearing autocratic even when making a final decision.

Your Practice (4 months): Document four leadership communication situations: two directive contexts and two consultative contexts. Note what made each style appropriate, how you explained the rationale whilst maintaining respect, and how stakeholders responded.

Success Indicator (12 weeks): Within 12 weeks, demonstrate appropriate use of both styles. Receive feedback from at least two stakeholders that you read situations well, or that you adapt your approach effectively.

Lead cross-cultural initiatives by adjusting your communication approach to match diverse stakeholder cultural expectations whilst keeping leadership presence.

When managing projects with stakeholders from multiple cultural contexts (hierarchical, consensus-building, relational, and plain-speaking), your communication must honour diverse expectations without compromising authenticity. Use a sequenced communication approach rather than attempting to use identical communication with all cultural groups.

Use cultural intelligence strategically:

- For hierarchical cultures (Nigeria, Greece, and South Korea), conduct private briefings with senior stakeholders before group meetings. Use formal tone and proper titles. Seek their endorsement.
- For consensus-building cultures (Sweden, Brazil, and Indonesia), allow for multiple collaborative meetings over extended timelines. Use inclusive language and patient facilitation.
- For plain-speaking cultures (e.g., the USA, the Netherlands, and Germany), provide efficient agendas with clear action items and decisive recommendations.
- For relational cultures (Mexico and South Africa), maintain regular check-ins that emphasise partnership and frame updates as collective progress.

Your Practice (4 months): Over four months, lead one cross-cultural initiative involving stakeholders from at least two different cultural contexts. Before initiating the project, research each culture's communication preferences. Document your communication strategy for each cultural group. During the initiative, use appropriate communication styles. Document what works and what creates friction. After the initiative, gather feedback from stakeholders in each cultural group: 'On a scale of 1–5, how culturally appropriate was my communication approach?'

Success Indicator (16 weeks): Receive positive feedback on cultural appropriateness from stakeholders in at least two different cultural contexts. For example, Nordic stakeholders don't complain about rushed decisions. Hierarchical-culture stakeholders feel respected and properly acknowledged. Egalitarian-culture stakeholders feel included and engaged. Relational-culture stakeholders feel partnership is genuine, not transactional.

COACHING INSIGHT

Cross-cultural leadership requires sequencing, not uniformity. You can't communicate in the same way with Nigerian executives, Swedish team leads, US business unit leaders, and Brazilian regional managers. Strategic sequencing (private briefings with hierarchical cultures first, extended consensus-building with Nordic cultures, efficient decisions with US cultures, and relationship maintenance with relational cultures) allows you to honour diverse expectations whilst driving results.

8. CONSOLIDATED DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

8. Consolidated Development Timeline

If your current role limits opportunities to practise some skills, focus first on the actions you can apply in your day-to-day work. Even small, consistent practice in real situations compounds and will strengthen your communication over time.

PHASE 1 | Months 1–3: Build Cross-Functional Influence

- **Domain 1:** Practise confident, cross-functional presence at least once weekly. Document stakeholder engagement. Use cultural adaptations from the Cultural Intelligence section.
- **Domain 2:** Deliver three multi-stakeholder presentations using the STAR structure. Achieve $\geq 4/5$ effectiveness from 75% of stakeholders.
- **Domain 3:** Use the Three Rules of Business Writing™ for all significant documents. Track clarification requests (target 40% reduction). Begin adapting tone and structure to different cultural stakeholder groups.
- **Domain 4:** Shift language to 70% 'We', 30% 'I' ratio. Gather feedback on collaborative versus authoritarian style.

Month 3 Checkpoint: Present to multiple stakeholder groups using STAR without having to think consciously about the structure. Clarification requests should be visibly reducing. If not, stay in Phase 1 for another month.

PHASE 2 | Months 4–6: Scale Strategic Influence

- **Domain 1:** Use the SCAN system in three executive interactions. Stay composed under questioning. Document the nonverbal cues that initially concerned you and what the clarifying questions revealed.
- **Domain 2:** Master the PREP structure for executive impromptu responses. Document four successful uses.
- **Domain 3:** Remove vague language through radical specificity. Conduct weekly audits for eight weeks.
- **Domain 4:** Document four situations showing the flexible directive/consultative style based on context.

Month 6 Checkpoint: Successfully use PREP in at least four impromptu executive situations without losing structure. Stakeholders should comment that your updates are 'easy to implement'. If this isn't happening, practise the frameworks consistently enough in real situations — not just in preparation.

PHASE 3 | Months 7–12: Show Executive Readiness

- **Domain 1:** Stay composed in two high-pressure situations (executive challenge, cultural tension, or crisis).
- **Domain 2:** Blend storytelling and data using advanced rhetorical devices. Achieve $\geq 4.5/5$ persuasiveness ratings across four presentations.
- **Domain 3:** Use the Flexible Communications Strategy™ for at least two major documents. Track the improvement in the acceptance rate against the baseline.
- **Domain 4:** Lead one cross-cultural initiative involving at least two cultural contexts. Receive positive feedback on cultural appropriateness.

Month 12 Checkpoint: You should receive unsolicited executive feedback that you handle pressure well or project confidence. You should lead at least one cross-cultural initiative with documented positive outcomes. If not, extend by three months and focus on the domain with the weakest performance.

9. MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK (WITH BASELINES)

MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

9. Measurement Framework (With Baselines)

BUILDING BASELINE (WEEKS 1-2)

Document current cross-functional collaboration effectiveness. Gather feedback from three to five cross-functional peers: ‘On a scale of 1–5, how effective is my cross-functional collaboration?’ Review the last three executive presentations (if available). Document outcomes, feedback received, and decision timelines. Identify recent interactions with stakeholders from at least two cultural contexts. Document what cultural adaptations you tried, what worked, and what created friction.

TARGET OUTCOMES (6-12 MONTHS)

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL INFLUENCE

≥4.5/5

Successfully lead communication for three to four cross-functional initiatives. Achieve ≥4.5/5 stakeholder satisfaction from 80%+ of cross-functional peers. Reduce time-to-decision by 40% compared to the baseline.

EXECUTIVE PRESENCE

≥4.5/5

Present to executive leadership at least six times with ≥4.5/5 effectiveness ratings. Receive an invitation to lead two or more initiatives based on executive confidence. Gain executive sponsor support for advancement.

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

Zero

Receive positive feedback on cultural appropriateness from stakeholders in at least three different cultural contexts. Zero significant cultural misunderstandings. Successfully manage competing cultural expectations in two or more initiatives.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT

Measurable

Drive measurable business outcomes through communication leadership (revenue impact, cost savings, or efficiency gains). Build thought leadership presence (three to four published pieces; two to three speaking engagements).

IF TARGETS NOT ACHIEVED

Conduct a diagnostic review. Which specific targets were missed? Which domain shows the weakest performance? Which cultural contexts remain the most challenging? Do a root cause analysis. Are you using ABF Formula™, the Three Rules of Business Writing™, and the Flexible Communications Strategy™ thoroughly? Are you building relationships before requesting support? Are cultural communication preferences being honoured? Create a focused three-month improvement plan based on the root cause. Reassess after three months.

SELF-MONITORING METRIC

By your 12-month reassessment, you should notice consistent positive feedback in at least two domains without asking for it. Senior leaders inviting you to lead important projects, cross-functional peers seeking your input without prompting, or stakeholders from diverse cultural contexts commenting on your adaptability — these are the signals that your development is working.

If you're not seeing this, extend your timeline by three months. The gap between competent and influential is closed through consistent application, not speed.

10. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

10. Recommended Resources

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

Influence and Thrive

(Lucille Ossai)

- Chapter 4 (SCAN System)
- Chapter 8 (ABF Formula)
- Chapter 9 (STAR Storytelling)
- Chapter 13 (Impromptu Speaking)
- Chapter 17 (Three Rules of Business Writing)
- Chapter 28 (Flexible Communications Strategy)

Rethinking Business Communications Blog (Lucille Ossai)

- **Two Potent Ways Specificity Transforms Your Communication And Drives Results**

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

TEDx Talk

- **Speak Like a Leader**
(advanced rhetorical application).



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G4D Recommended Resource Hub

All recommended books, courses, tools, and frameworks — curated for your profile and updated regularly. Access hub on any device.

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11. FINAL NOTE

II. Final Note

Morgan,

You're moving from an effective team manager to a cross-functional leader. At this stage, discipline matters more than talent. The difference between managers who plateau and those who advance isn't ability. It's the deliberate use of communication frameworks to create measurable cross-functional impact whilst honouring cultural diversity.

The shift is fundamental: from 'Can I lead my team?' to 'Can I influence the organisation?'

The frameworks (ABF Formula™, Three Rules of Business Writing™, and Flexible Communications Strategy™) are your differentiators. Technical excellence gets you noticed, but strategic communication across functions and cultures gets you to the next level. Use the frameworks deliberately and consistently.

Cultural intelligence is no longer optional; it's foundational. Your communication shapes how senior leaders and diverse cultural stakeholders see your readiness for broader organisational leadership.

Some development areas may feel familiar but easy to ignore. This report is designed to highlight patterns that can limit your impact if left unaddressed. Treat these insights as early signals for growth, not as criticism.

Retake the assessment after 12 months to track progression.

Global 4-Domain Communication Skills Rating Tool™ | Development Insights Report

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This is a sample report, generated using a fictitious name and illustrative score data to demonstrate the structure and depth of the Global 4-Domain Communication Skills Rating Tool™ output. A completed report is based on an individual's own self-reported responses and reflects their communication patterns at the time of completion.

The insights, recommendations, and development strategies provided are for professional development purposes only. They do not constitute a psychological assessment, clinical evaluation, or formal performance appraisal, and should not be used as the sole basis for employment, promotion, or other organisational decisions.

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