Southwest®

Professional Communications Certification

Study Guide

CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW

The Southwest Airlines Professional Communications Certification verifies individuals possess the soft skills necessary to thrive in any workplace environment. The certification validates the knowledge and skills necessary to communicate effectively, think critically and work with others, resulting in an employee with greater interpersonal and customer service skills. Those who earn the certification are more qualified and prepared to enter any work environment, regardless of industry interest.

EXAM OVERVIEW

The Southwest Airlines Professional Communications Certification is hosted on the iCEV testing platform. The certification exam is a 100-question, randomized assessment. Exam questions are in the format of multiple choice, sort order, diagramming, matching, labeling and other question types meant to fully evaluate an individual's competency of the industry standards. The certification exam should be proctored within a controlled environment. The proctor of the exam must review and verify all exam procedures and provide electronic documentation through the exam platform.

More information about the certification exam and testing platform, including optional preparation materials offered by iCEV, can be found at https://www.icevonline.com/profcomm.

ABOUT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

In its 49th year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 59,000 Employees to a Customer base topping 130 million passengers annually. Southwest became the nation's largest domestic air carrier in 2003 and maintains that ranking based on the U.S. Department of Transportation's most recent reporting of domestic originating passengers boarded. In peak travel seasons, Southwest operates more than 4,000 weekday departures among a network of 101 destinations in the United States and 10 additional countries. Learn more at https://careers.southwestair.com/campus-reach.

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

The certification exam assesses knowledge and skills from the following weighted industry standards set by Southwest Airlines:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES- 5%

- Vocabulary Comprehension
- Reading Comprehension
- Listening Comprehension
- Writing Applications

WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES- 25%

- Communication Etiquette
- Components of Workplace Communication
- Digital Communication Technologies
- Customer Service Techniques

COMMUNICATION THEORY- 10%

- Communication Processes & Models
- Communication Styles Overview
- Listening Process

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES- 20%

- Teamwork Strategies
- Individual Skills, Styles & Roles in Collaboration
- Conflict Management
- Effective Leadership Styles

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES- 20%

- Writing Process
- Elements of Professional Writing
- Business Letters
- Memorandums
- Research Process
- Interpreting Information
- Citing Sources

VERBAL COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES- 20%

- Presentation Strategies
- Speech Component
- Public Speaking Procedures
- Extemporaneous Speaking Techniques

Industry Standard Overview

To pass the Southwest Airlines Professional Communications Certification exam, certification candidates must have adequate knowledge of the industry standards. The following outlines an in-depth overview of the industry standards and sub-standards:

Industry Standard: English Language Proficiencies

- Vocabulary
- Reading
- Listening
- Speaking
- Spelling
- Sentences

Industry Standard: Workplace Communication Techniques

- Digital Communications & Telecommunication
  - -The Sender
  - -The Message
  - -The Media
  - -Encoding
  - -Noise
  - -Decoding
  - -The Receiver
- Feedback in Digital Communication
- Technology Concerns
- Netiquette
- Telephone/Cell Phone Etiquette
- Email Privacy Policies
- Email Spam
- E-Commerce
- Graphic Design
- Design Elements
  - -Text
  - -Graphics
  - -Headlines
  - -Color
  - -White Space
- Balance

Industry Standard: Communication Theory

- Shannon-Weaver Model of Communications
- Transaction Communication Model
- The Communication Process
- Information Source
- Message
- Channel or Medium
- Receiver
- Feedback
- Noise
- Communication Styles
    - Assertive
    - Aggressive
    - Passive
    - Passive-Aggressive
    - Non-Verbal Communication
- Listening Process
    - Deliberative Listening
    - Evaluative Listening
    - Appreciative Listening
    - Empathetic Listening
    - False Listening
    - Selective Listening
    - Partial Listening
    - Full Listening
    - Deep Listening
- Professional Communication
- Internal Business
- External Business Communication
- Impact of Communication on Society
- Propaganda
- Bandwagon
- Glittering Generalities
- Either/Or Fallacy

Industry Standard: Interpersonal Communication Techniques

- Leadership Styles
    - Authoritarian
    - Participative
    - Laissez Faire
    - Abdicratic

- Leadership Groups
    - Formal Groups
    - Command Groups
    - Task Groups
    - Affinity Groups
    - Informal Groups
    - Friendship Groups
    - Interest Groups
- Leadership Group Dynamics
- Analyzing Group Effectiveness
- Peer Evaluation
- Conflict in the Workplace
- Conflict Management
- Completive Style
- Accommodating Style
- Avoiding Style
- Compromising Style
- Collaborative Style
- Conflict
- Discrimination in the Workplace
- Diversity
- Discrimination Laws
- BOQQ
- Customer Service
- Good Communication
- Bad Communication
- Customer Complaints
- Teamwork
- Team Member Styles
- Team Member Task Roles

Industry Standard: Written Communication Procedures

- Reports
- Proposals
- Case Studies
- Memorandums
- Business Later
- Letter Formats
    - Block
    - Modified
    - Semi-Block

- Organizing Information
- Inverted Pyramid
- Deductive Reasoning
- Inductive Reasoning
- Priority Sequencing
- Charts
- Outlines
- Diagrams
- Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation
- Editor's Mark
- Research Process
- Primary Sources
- Periodicals
- Scholarly Journals
- Government Agencies
- Books
- Electronic Media
- Plagiarism
- Citing Sources
- Citation Styles
    - APA
    - Chicago
    - MLA

Industry Standard: Verbal Communication Procedures

- Speech Preparation
- Purpose
- Types of Presentations
    - Formal
    - Informal
    - Webinars
- Audience
- Speech Development
- Parts of a Speech
    - Introduction
    - Connection
    - Preview
    - Body
    - Review
    - Conclusion

Speech Delivery

Optional Preparation Materials Overview

The preparation materials offered by iCEV for the Southwest Airlines Professional Communications Certification was specifically created to prepare candidates for the certification exam. While it is not required to complete the preparatory materials before accessing the certification exam, Southwest Airlines recommends certification candidates complete some form of training. The following outlines the lessons scope and objectives:

Lesson 1: English Applications

1. To establish strategies for learning academic vocabulary.
2. To develop reading strategies to enhance comprehension of written text
3. To use visual and contextual support to confirm understanding and develop vocabulary, grasp language structures, and comprehend challenging language.

Lesson 2: Introduction to Professional Communication

1. To identify purposes and types of professional communication.
2. To examine specific components of the listening process in communication.
3. To effectively communicate in interviews and presentations.
4. To effectively apply appropriate etiquette and social responsibilities in communication.

Lesson 3: Communication Styles

1. To describe the communication and listening processes.
2. To analyze different communication models.
3. To interpret the effects of non-verbal communication.
4. To apply communication to professional situations.
5. To examine the impact of communications on society.

Lesson 4: Written Communication Practices

1. To apply the appropriate use of grammar, spelling and punctuation rules.
2. To examine methods to organize information.
3. To discover various avenues for research and preparation for communications.

Lesson 5: Workplace Communication

1. To demonstrate an understanding of appropriate communication with managers.
2. To demonstrate an understanding of appropriate communication with coworkers.
3. To demonstrate an understanding of appropriate communication with clients and customers.
4. To learn to communicate through verbal, nonverbal and digital means.

Lesson 6: Business Letters & Memos

1. To differentiate between a business letter and a memo.
2. To examine what information should be included and when to use each.
3. To distinguish the format in which to write a business letter or memo.
4. To analyze the different means of which these documents can be distributed.

Lesson 7: Researching Strategies & Tactics

1. To interpret and communicate information.
2. To demonstrate the use of various research strategies for obtaining information.
3. To compose and illustrate the correct form of documenting resources.

Lesson 8: Presentation Strategies & Tactics

1. To understand the strategies used when making a presentation.
2. To explore tactics used to present in different settings.
3. To utilize different visual aids to heighten the experience of the presentation.

Lesson 9: Public Speaking Basics

1. To identify the different components of a speech.
2. To analyze various factors to consider when creating a speech for a variety of audiences, situations and purposes.
3. To recognize the appropriate presentation technique when presenting in a formal or informal setting.

Lesson 10: Extemporaneous Speaking

1. Adapt language for audience, purpose, situation and intent.
2. Employ planning and time management skills related to professional communications.
3. Analyze audience, occasion and purposes of speaking occasions.
4. Utilize effective strategies to organize presentations.

Lesson 11: Introduction to Digital Communications

1. To define digital communication.
2. To outline appropriate media to deliver digital products.
3. To understand various forms of digital communication outlets.
4. To apply and evaluate graphic design and editing concepts in digital communication.

Lesson 12: Telecommunications Basics

1. To understand and evaluate various methods of telecommunications.
2. To employ appropriate business ethics and correct etiquette when using telecommunications.

Lesson 13: Steps to Superior Customer Service

1. To identify key components of superior customer service.
2. To analyze how customer loyalty is created and sustained.
3. To describe the customer service cycle.

Lesson 14: Managing Diversity

1. To define diversity.
2. To analyze the role of culture.
3. To investigate the benefits and challenges of managing diversity.
4. To learn the skills of effectively communicating with racial, ethnic, gender, age and ability diverse populations.

Lesson 15: Conflict Management

1. To define conflict.
2. To analyze common causes of conflict.
3. To compare five conflict management styles.
4. To learn skills to resolve conflict.
5. To explain third party intervention process.

Lesson 16: Teamwork & Collaboration

1. To differentiate between various learning styles, personality traits and leadership styles found within the classroom and the workplace.
2. To develop team-building skills.
3. To identify leadership and teamwork qualities which creates a pleasant working atmosphere.
4. To exhibit teamwork skills and the ability to cooperate, contributes and collaborate as a member of a team.
5. To explain and recognize the value of collaboration within the workplace.
6. To conduct and participate in meetings and employ mentoring skills.
7. To demonstrate collaboration skills through teamwork.
8. To identify and practice effective interpersonal and team-building skills involving situations with coworkers, supervisors and clients.

Lesson 17: Leadership Styles

1. To identify and analyze leadership styles.
2. To explore characteristics of a leader.
3. To examine verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.
4. To understand the purpose of groups and leadership's role within them.