

Contemporary Public Diplomacy

15 – 19 February 2027
Cape Town (South Africa)

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Introduction

In today's interconnected and rapidly changing world, Contemporary Public Diplomacy has become a vital tool for shaping national images, enhancing influence, and managing relations with global audiences. Public diplomacy is no longer limited to government-to-government channels; it now includes media, multinational corporations, cultural institutions, and even individual influencers who play significant roles in international communication.

This program is designed for executives, team leaders, and professionals across government and private institutions in the Middle East and North Africa. It equips participants with practical skills and analytical tools to understand the transformations in international relations, the rise of soft power, and the use of modern communication strategies. Participants will gain the ability to manage reputation, handle crises, and strengthen international cooperation in alignment with institutional and national objectives.

Course Objectives

- Understand the fundamental concepts of contemporary public diplomacy.
- Analyze the role of communication and media in shaping international perceptions.
- Explore modern tools for cultural and media outreach.
- Apply strategies to enhance soft power and influence.
- Study global and regional best practices in public diplomacy.
- Develop the ability to manage reputation and influence public opinion.
- Strengthen strategic planning skills in the context of international relations.
- Leverage technology and digital platforms to support public diplomacy efforts.

Course Outlines

Day 1: Introduction to Contemporary Public Diplomacy

- Defining public diplomacy and its role in the 21st century.
- The evolution from traditional to contemporary public diplomacy.
- The relationship between soft power and foreign policy.
- Distinguishing public diplomacy from traditional diplomacy.
- Roles of government and non-governmental actors.
- Group activity: Case study analysis of a country that successfully used public diplomacy.

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Day 2: Media and Communication Tools in Public Diplomacy

- The role of traditional and digital media in external communication.
- The influence of social media networks on shaping perceptions.
- Techniques for targeting and tailoring messages to international audiences.
- Measuring the effectiveness of public diplomacy campaigns.
- Managing media crises from a diplomatic perspective.
- Practical exercise: Designing a media campaign to improve a country's or institution's image.

Day 3: Cultural Diplomacy, Education, and Exchange

- Culture as a driver of international influence.
- Educational and academic exchange as long-term relationship building.
- The impact of cultural and artistic initiatives on public opinion.
- Academic cooperation and research as part of soft power.
- Examples of successful cultural diplomacy initiatives worldwide.
- Group task: Designing a cultural initiative to strengthen international relations.

Day 4: Reputation Management and Digital Diplomacy

- Understanding national and institutional reputation.
- Strategies for managing reputation in the digital era.
- The role of technology in modern diplomacy.
- Tackling misinformation and disinformation.
- Integrating digital diplomacy into broader soft power strategies.
- Simulation: Crisis reputation management on digital platforms.

Day 5: Practical Applications, Case Studies, and Evaluation

- Recap of key concepts and tools.
- Case studies from the Middle East and international contexts.
- Discussion of future trends in public diplomacy.
- Final group project: Designing a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy for a country or institution.
- Presentations and peer feedback.
- Final assessment and key takeaways.

Why Attend This Course: Wins & Losses!

- Gain specialized knowledge in contemporary public diplomacy.
- Acquire practical skills applicable in government and private institutions.
- Understand the link between media, culture, and foreign policy.
- Strengthen capabilities in reputation management and soft power.
- Learn from international and regional success stories.
- Improve leadership and strategic planning skills.
- Support institutional objectives through innovative communication tools.
- Expand professional networks across diplomacy, media, and international relations.

Conclusion

Contemporary Public Diplomacy is at the heart of modern international relations, combining media, culture, education, and technology to influence global perceptions and build long-term relationships. This program blends theory with practice, enabling participants to design strategies that enhance reputation, strengthen cooperation, and support institutional goals.

Through case studies, interactive activities, and practical projects, participants will gain the knowledge and skills to apply public diplomacy tools effectively in their professional and organizational contexts.

A graphic of a chessboard with several chess pieces (a king, a queen, and a pawn) in gold and silver, set against a background of concentric circles.

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