

# COURT COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

## KSA Ranking Survey: Personal Perspective

### 1. PURPOSE AND COMMUNICATION FUNDAMENTALS

Effective court leaders know and use six communication fundamentals to support the purposes and responsibilities of courts. The fundamentals are 1) positive message, 2) credibility, 3) honesty, 4) accessibility, 5) openness, and 6) understandability.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Your  
 personal  
 learning  
 need and  
 interest  
**1-10**

Importance  
 to your  
 court  
 organization  
**1-10**

Highest ranking = 1  
 Lowest ranking = 10

<b>A</b>	Knowledge of the Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts Curriculum Guidelines and their application to Court Community Communication;		
<b>B</b>	Knowledge of the implications of Roscoe Pound's seminal 1906 ABA speech "The Causes of Popular Dissatisfaction with the Administration of Justice" for Court Community Communication.		
<b>C</b>	Knowledge of the <b>Trial Court Performance Standards</b> , particularly those in the area of Public Trust and Confidence and the relationship of Public Trust and Confidence to Access to Justice, Expedition and Timeliness, Fairness, Equality, and Integrity, and Independence and Accountability;		
<b>D</b>	Ability to develop and convey a positive message;		
<b>E</b>	Ability to be credible in the information that is generated by the court;		
<b>F</b>	Ability to be honest in response to inquiries;		
<b>G</b>	Ability to be accessible;		
<b>H</b>	Ability to be open;		
<b>I</b>	Ability to be understandable;		
<b>J</b>	Skill in ensuring that the courts are understandable, accessible, and responsive without compromise to the independence and impartiality of court processes and decisions.		

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### 2. UNDERSTANDABLE COURTS

Court leaders must recognize the importance of understandable courts and know how to assess the court's understandability and ease of use for average citizens. They and other court officials, both judges and staff, increase the community's understanding of, access to, and ease of use of the courts.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Highest ranking = 1  
 Lowest ranking = 10

*Your  
personal  
learning  
need and  
interest  
**1-10***      *Importance  
to your  
court  
organization  
**1-10***

<b>A</b>	Ability to assess and recognize current court access, communication, and ease of use problems and barriers and to effectuate solutions;		
<b>B</b>	Knowledge of successful techniques including self-service centers and technology solutions and the Internet used in other courts to make complex processes understandable and accessible to the average citizen considering, responding to, or actively involved in litigation;		
<b>C</b>	Knowledge of how to improve access to the court both through the telephone and the Internet, to help the public use and respond to court forms and notices, to find the courthouse and its departments, and, once they come to court, to navigate court facilities;		
<b>D</b>	Ability to oversee staff and processes that translate complex court processes to the average citizen while avoiding the practice of law or giving legal advice;		
<b>E</b>	Knowledge of needed adjustments and accommodations to the self-represented in family law and other case types;		
<b>F</b>	Ability to make an inventory of public contact information and to make sure that the court meets public needs;		
<b>G</b>	Skill in implementing excellent customer service throughout the court;		
<b>H</b>	Knowledge of current technology that can heighten the public's understanding and increase ease of use through kiosks, interactive computer programs, and the Internet;		
<b>I</b>	Ability to develop court Web sites that incorporate "new media" (video, audio, photographs, and text) to promote public understanding and public access;		
<b>J</b>	Skill in educating court employees about the judicial and justice system, how their job fits in the larger system and its importance to justice and public trust and confidence, and how they can better serve the public during daily contacts, whether by telephone or in person.		

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### 3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Court leaders must plan, create, develop, and implement effective and affordable community outreach and establish and maintain a free flow of information between the court and the public. Court leaders not only educate and inform the public, they learn from and improve the court through community outreach.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Highest ranking = 1  
 Lowest ranking = 11

*Your personal learning need and interest*  
**1-11**

*Importance to your court organization*  
**1-11**

<b>A</b>	Knowledge of the <b>Trial Court Performance Standards</b> , particularly those that relate to Access to Justice and Public Trust and Confidence;		
<b>B</b>	Knowledge of the many communities served by the court, their perceptions of the court, and their needs;		
<b>C</b>	Knowledge of successful community outreach in other courts;		
<b>D</b>	Ability to assess a court's need for diverse community outreach, the resources that are available and needed for outreach, and how to deploy available and needed resources;		
<b>E</b>	Ability to bring together key people from diverse backgrounds to assist the court in a planning process designed to inform and improve the court and the justice system;		
<b>F</b>	Ability to bring together judges, other court officials, and particular communities and neighborhoods to listen to concerns and to become better known and more knowledgeable about the people and communities the courts serve;		
<b>G</b>	Skill in garnering support of the other court officials, executive and legislative leaders, and others for community outreach;		
<b>H</b>	Skill in overseeing development and implementation of use of the Internet and interactive computer programs to interact and communicate with the public;		
<b>I</b>	Ability to think creatively in developing targeted community outreach programming -- to update existing efforts and to develop new and promising approaches;		
<b>J</b>	Ability to listen, assimilate, and process community input ;		
<b>K</b>	Ability to turn constructive input and insight into positive changes.		

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### 4. PUBLIC INFORMATION

Court leaders must understand public perceptions of courts and be able to assess and respond to the information needs of multiple constituencies. Effective courts plan, package, and deliver messages in positive and understandable ways by diverse means. They effectuate a higher level of public understanding of and satisfaction with the judiciary.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

Highest ranking = 1  
Lowest ranking = 11

*Your personal learning need and interest*  
**1-11**

*Importance to your court organization*  
**1-11**

<b>A</b>	Knowledge of national and state surveys of how the community gets information concerning the judiciary and their perceptions about courts, judges, and the judicial process;		
<b>B</b>	Knowledge of the limitations of public information campaigns in correcting every misperception about courts, judges, and the judicial process;		
<b>C</b>	Knowledge about how to use technology to inform, educate, and persuade and to keep abreast of changes in technology and the opportunities these changes present for court public information;		
<b>D</b>	Ability to identify specific audiences and interest groups who would be the targets of a public information campaign -- community leaders, people from distinct ethnic and income levels, community action and other civic groups, special interest groups, educators, legislators, and city/county officials, among others;		
<b>E</b>	Ability to determine information needs of specific groups;		
<b>F</b>	Ability to create and deliver proactive, targeted information delivery systems that can sustain and support themselves;		
<b>G</b>	Ability to prioritize potential public education/information projects so that the court is not trying to do too much all at once;		
<b>H</b>	Skill in overseeing an interactive Web site for the court with accurate current information that tracks cases and provides information about the court, its processes, and innovations;		
<b>I</b>	Skill in developing and delivering information that educates the other branches of the government about court functions, needs, and accomplishments;		
<b>J</b>	Ability to articulate realistic expectations about court-generated public information and to explain its benefits to judges, court staff, and legislative and executive branch leaders and their staff;		
<b>K</b>	Skill in evaluating each program to learn if it is working and worth repeating.		

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### 5. THE MEDIA AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Court leader relationships with the news media must be positive and proactive. Courts should have a media plan to promote public understanding and respect through the news media. This includes having systems in place to respond to media inquiries in a timely manner.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Highest ranking = 1  
 Lowest ranking = 12

*Your personal learning need and interest*  
**1-12**

*Importance to your court organization*  
**1-12**

<b>A</b>	Knowledge about the daily workings of the news media including print, broadcast, and “new media” delivered through the Internet, and the demands and constraints on management and reporters from each medium;		
<b>B</b>	Ability to develop a court “media plan” to establish a productive working relationship with reporters, editors, news directors, and editorial page staffers for routine coverage of the courts, crisis coverage of an acute situation, and promoting accurate and positive information about the courts;		
<b>C</b>	Ability to assemble a working advisory committee of judges, court officials and news media to assess the regular needs of the news media and the capabilities of the court to meet those needs;		
<b>D</b>	Knowledge of free press versus fair trial issues, related constitutional, statutory, and case law requirements, and what they mean for both the press and the court;		
<b>E</b>	Skill in putting court actions and decisions into context;		
<b>F</b>	Skill in responding to the media and organizing the court when it is faced with the high-visibility, extraordinary case;		
<b>G</b>	Ability to be an effective interviewee of both print and broadcast media and to enhance the credibility of the court and its leadership;		
<b>H</b>	Ability to provide incentives for accurate and stellar reporting of court news;		
<b>I</b>	Ability to decide who is going to speak for the court on what issues and to make sure that these decisions are respected by the entire court family;		
<b>J</b>	Knowledge of when, with whom, and how to be on or, when occasionally required, to go off the record;		
<b>K</b>	Ability to use the news media to promote positive information about the courts and the legal system without going through reporters to do so;		
<b>L</b>	Knowledge of how a court can work closely with the news media to supply appropriate information without compromising the judicial process.		

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**6. LEADERSHIP AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

Court leaders must lead Court Community Communication and direct and oversee staff assigned to it. To do so, they must ensure that communications fit with the court purposes, people, processes, and operations that they support. Effective courts ensure that court community communication needs are assessed and prioritized, and that programming to meet those needs is well-managed and evaluated.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

Highest ranking = 1  
 Lowest ranking = 8

*Your personal learning need and interest*  
**1-8**

*Importance to your court organization*  
**1-8**

<b>A</b>	Ability to lead the planning and delivery of court community communication through the court executive leadership team and others, both judges and staff;		
<b>B</b>	Ability to assess overall court community communication needs and determine whether the court is meeting those needs;		
<b>C</b>	Skill in assessing the court's capacity to perform community outreach, public information, and media relations, to assign the right people to the right task, and to build staff capacity if it is lacking;		
<b>D</b>	Skill in prioritizing communication issues and needs;		
<b>E</b>	Ability to plan court community communication needs and to allocate existing and acquire needed resources for court community communication;		
<b>F</b>	Skill in developing and delivering communications programming that will have the greatest impact on needs for the lowest cost in resources -- human, technology, and otherwise;		
<b>G</b>	Ability to develop and utilize evaluation techniques to determine the effectiveness of both old and new communication programming;		
<b>H</b>	Ability to adjust community communication strategy, staff assignments, and delivery when needed.		