




EPIC
assistants

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Your work can be EPIC

We love helping our clients reach new heights in their communication:




Preparing for their most important speeches -

from strategic positioning and defining key messages to practicing confident and authentic delivery.



Developing critical teams to communicate effectively -

how to present externally, internally and hold meetings that people actually *want* to attend.



Fostering a community of learners -

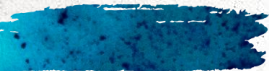
training the trainers and developing curriculums and tools for each team, department or the entire organisation.

We seriously love our work!

... Not because of a chronic lack of meaning in our personal lives - on the contrary:


Why we do what we do

We believe everyone should have access to the best systems and tools for improving their communication -
from high school students to top executives.




A world in which we can all find our own **authentic voice**, **express our ideas** effectively
and **inspire others** to action.

That's why our work is both deeply fulfilling on its own and a stepping stone to realizing our vision.



Each of our clients provides us with an important piece of that puzzle - from individuals,
local initiatives and NGOs to international corporations and institutions.

We thank our clients for their trust.





Our approach

Our approach is not just custom tailored - we strive to make the entire process truly **meaningful**.

Because, above all else - **we really, really care**.

Our care has shaped our methodology:

It's designed not just to provide a unique experience for your team every step of the way, but to ensure you really continue developing after we're gone.



Methodology:



system for development
of presentation and
communication skills

Developed by



REKA system

Reka system has been developed through over 15 years of daily work with thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds. It contains experiences from various backgrounds, including:

Tango Natural - instructor and performer: body work and expression, nonverbal communication, overcoming stress and stagefright, performing

TEDx - speaker trainer: strategic communication, storytelling, translating complex ideas into effective messages, inspiring and motivating the audience

Civic Initiatives - trainer: guiding groups through processes, training and facilitation skills

School of Activism - founder: communication as a tool for making ideas happen, building a team, nurturing proactivity in oneself and others



SCHOOL OF ACTIVISM

Methodology

The process starts from a detailed understanding of **how the development of the employees is connected to the goals and needs of the company.**

The training participants' current level of communication skills is analyzed and **the training is adjusted to their capacities and needs.** Throughout the training, the level of work is continuously adjusted to the participants' tempo of learning, so that they are gently but firmly pushed out of their comfort zone to grow and develop.

Through a range of practical exercises the participants explore the key principles of communication and slowly build a comprehensive, theoretical framework.

The training is designed so that **everyone attending will take part as much as possible,** i.e. they will have numerous opportunities to practice, make mistakes, learn from them and grow.







Examples of exercises

How to establish a more active or passive posture, based on the needs of the situation (whether we wish to talk, listen, give space to others to express themselves...)



Examples of exercises

How to use our posture and attitude to deal with uncomfortable situations, e.g. when colleagues are literally “hovering over our head”.



Examples of exercises

What do we do with our hands?

Participants explore how to use different gestures to express themselves, connect with the audience, set boundaries and achieve other goals.





Everyone continuously
participates

Each exercise can be adjusted to
work with large groups, so that
after a 1-on-1 demonstration,
all the participants can
constantly practice.

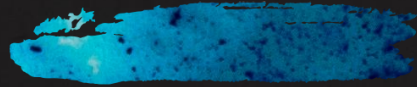
Workshop preview



Key principles and techniques for
improving our communication skills

Workshop conducted for Creative
Mentorship

Tools and materials





Tools and materials

One of the goals of Reka system is to have the participants strengthened to continue developing their communication skills on their own, individually and in internal groups and teams, after the training is over. To this end a range of tools and materials has been developed to assist them in their work.

During the training each participant can get a package with the tools as well as detailed instructions on how to use them - the work book, communication cards and pebble.



Communication cards set

The cards serve as a **daily, physical reminder to work on a particular aspect of communication skills.**

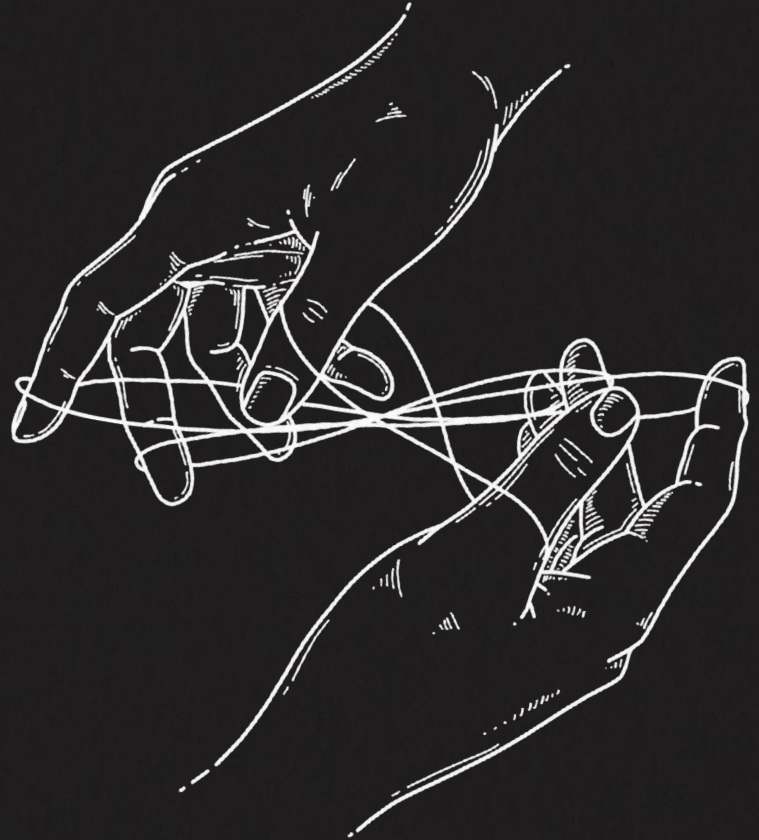
The users carry and place them in their work environment (*on their work desk, near the laptop, in the agenda, wallet, pocket etc.*).

On one side is an illustration which relates to a particular communication principle, while on the other side there is a reminder of a concrete exercise.



Workbook

The workbook has **detailed instructions on how to use the Reka system and the tools (cards and pebble), an overview of the exercises and principles, as well as work pages** in which the users can prepare meetings, presentations and other communications.





How to approach the process

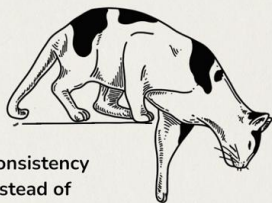
Everyone has their own circumstances, their own work environment, daily rhythm and different needs and challenges. What is the common denominator in how we approach the process, regardless of circumstances?

The **overall attitude** we take. We strive to continuously apply the following principles:

Curiosity instead of self-criticism

We are oftentimes unnecessarily harsh toward ourselves: "Ugh, I talk too fast, why am I always in such a rush?!". Why don't we calmly say instead: „Hmm, interesting, in this situation I talk too fast. Why is this so?"

Mistakes are an integral, unavoidable part of the process, and curiosity is one of our greatest allies in facing them. Instead of destructive strictness, frustration and quitting, a **curious approach** creates space for asking better questions and getting more realistic and constructive answers for next steps.



Consistency instead of occasionality

It is important to have continuity in the process. Of course there will be difficult days filled with unplanned obligations. We strive to preserve the thread of the process, to **make even the smallest step**, no matter what it is. A quick glance at the card or workbook just once during the entire day is a meaningful action.

Patience instead of expectations

Some things will be resolved faster than we expected, others slower. One day a certain exercise will be very easy, the next day it will feel like you've never done it before. It takes time for us to integrate the exercises and principles and make them a core part of our expression. **We accept** and follow our own rhythm of learning.

Iteration instead of a master plan

Don't look for one perfect attempt. We are not aiming at an impeccable sprint with ten amazing steps, but rather a marathon in which we need to make a myriad of small steps, many of them quite imperfect. The important thing is to **keep trying**.



Resourcefulness instead of rigidity

Different periods and circumstances will confront us with various challenges that could shake up our current approach. We will **adapt** to situations on the fly. We will also give several chances to a certain approach, but if we see that it doesn't really work - we will try another one. We might return to it later when circumstances change again.

Playfulness instead of strictness

Our journey will be much more enjoyable and fruitful if we approach situations, challenges and mistakes - the entire process itself - **as a game**, with light seriousness.

"Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play" Heraclitus said over two and a half millennia ago.

I am aware that practicing and developing these principles is an entire topic unto itself. Perhaps one day a special system and cards will be developed for them. For now, try to discover, with light seriousness, how to apply these principles in your own process.



Objects are important. Human beings are materialists - as Alan Watts says: a materialist is "a person who loves material, and who reverences it, and who delights in using it to its best advantage".

It is not the same to get an email or a hand-written letter, to listen to an mp3 or feel the vibrations of the instruments at a live gig, to buy something or to personally make that same thing. It's not a coincidence that vinyl records are popular again - in contrast to the streaming platforms' infinite choice of polished sound.

A growing number of people want a tactile, intimate, positively limited experience. The crackling of the record is not a bug but a feature, a fundamental part of the entire experience.

Research shows that we remember better and our brain is more activated when we write **with our hand** instead of typing on the keyboard. Many software developers, marketers and other workers whose job implies a lot of screen-time on a daily basis are quitting and opening cafeterias, pastry shops and woodworking shops,



because among other things they miss the feeling of doing something with their hands, that they are creating something *real*.

This is why I wish to equip you with objects that become a part of your actual every-day environment, **which you can move, touch, fiddle with.**

Objects have their weight and gravity - they provide grounding and focus - through their limitedness they can provide huge space and support for your work.



(Headline)

(Date)

Audience



Context



Goals



Exercise

Feedback

Pebble






A pebble is a small item which can be carried in the pocket, around the neck or placed on the desk. People enjoy holding it and playing with it, and slowly **it becomes a constant reminder to apply the Reka system**, i.e. to practice communication skills.

Workshops/trainings



Overview

The most common requests from our clients for individual and group trainings are:

-  **Public speaking and presentation skills**
-  **Running effective meetings**
-  **Speaker preparation**



Presentation skills -

The physical aspect



Breathing

How we use our breath to regulate our internal state, support our voice and body and be ready for whatever is required in communication.

Voice

How emphasis, intonation, speed and other elements make what we say meaningful and effective.

Pauses

How we use silence and breaks in our speech to gather our thoughts, further emphasise our words and give the audience time to process what we are saying.

Audience

How we establish and maintain a connection with the audience, follow their mood and rhythm of understanding, (non)verbally ask for feedback and adjust our presentation accordingly.

Posture

How we stand and sit, how our posture helps us build confidence, draw and direct attention and achieve other communicational goals.

Attitude

How to mentally approach a presentation, how to build and maintain confidence, calmness and other internal states necessary for the situation at hand, how to overcome stress, stage fright and other unexpected situations.

Hands

Numerous ways hands are used in communication - as support for our words, for directing the attention of the audience, establishing contact and boundaries etc.

Movement

How we move through space (particularly when presenting in front of larger groups), how to achieve a lot with just a little bit of movement.

Presentation skills - Strategy and content



Understanding the audience

Who is our audience exactly, what kind of prejudices and previous knowledge might they have, why is it in their interest to listen to us.

Defining the goals

What do we want to achieve (to build trust, inspire, sell...) with different audiences.

Interactivity and improvisation

How to define the framework and goals for improvisation and interaction with the audience (e.g. During my 30-minute presentation, I have prepared 5 minutes in which I can ask the audience several questions in order to better understand their needs or opinions on certain topics, as well as what to say in case they don't give any answers).

Strategic aspect

How does a particular presentation or meeting fit into the bigger picture of communicating certain messages, values etc.

Finding the essence and the structure

What will be the segments of our talk (intro, key points, conclusion...), what is a priority to communicate and what can be omitted.

Effective messages and storytelling

How to effectively formulate our ideas having in mind time and other constraints - which examples, comparisons, words, sentences, materials and other ways can we use in the final presentation. How do we "translate" complex ideas and concepts into simple language, without losing depth and nuance.

Developing the slide deck

How do we approach the planning and development of the slide deck (Powerpoint presentation), learning the main principles of visual communication and storytelling.

Communication skills - Running meetings



The core meeting structure

Essential elements in every meeting. Understanding the introduction and meeting framework, discussion time, conclusions and action points.

Preparation

How to get ready for a meeting, particularly when there's little time for prepping.

The strategic framework

Defining the audience, context and goals of the meeting, understanding the bigger picture within which a meeting is taking place.

How to approach meetings

Nurturing the values of readiness, agility, proactivity and openness, both in facilitators and meeting participants.

Facilitation

How to take or give the word to someone, direct the discussion and involve everyone present, draw conclusions and make other decisions.

Challenging situations

How to recognize and resolve the most common challenges - being stuck on a particular point, going in circles, frustration in the air, "the elephant in the room"...

Good participation

What it means to be a good participant, how to support the facilitator in running an effective meeting (*taking notes, time tracking, recognizing challenging situations...*)

All techniques are practiced through simulations of meeting situations from the participants' real-life workplace experience.

Speaker preparation

Strategic framework

Setting the audience, context and goals. Discovering the audience's needs, prejudices, interests and other key insights, defining strategic goals and how the speech fits into the bigger picture.

Content

Developing the narrative - defining key messages and the order in which they appear, deciding what is essential to say and what can be left out. Using examples, audience interaction, storytelling and other methods to make the speech more effective and engaging. Developing the slide deck that follows the speaker and not the other way around.

The performance

Presentation skills practice - working on the posture, voice, gestures, movement through space, how to connect confidently and authentically with the audience, how to deal with stage fright and other challenging or unexpected situations.

The preparation process is **completely customized** to the needs and the sensibility of the client, based on the experience of working individually with over 500 speakers, including 100 TEDx speakers.

Pricing

Our pricing depends on several factors.

While we regularly conduct one-off workshops, we provide special terms for those willing to invest long-term into their personal or their organization's development.

It's best we get in touch and understand better what your needs are.



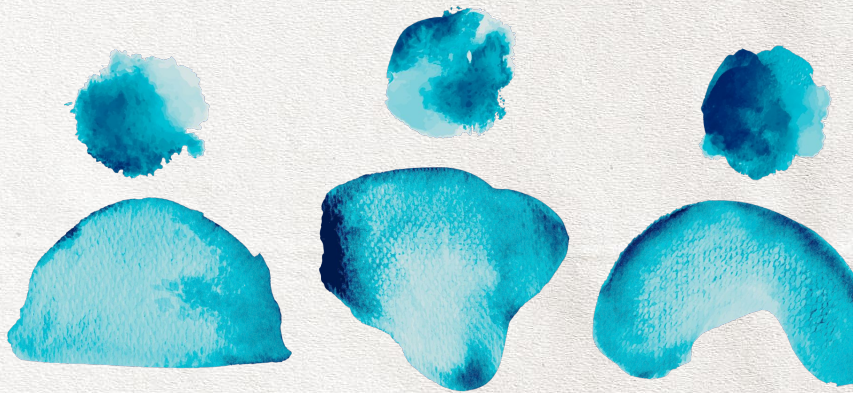
Our team

We are, above all else, friends.

We bring the **values we share** into our work.

We are extremely dedicated not just to delivering a solution, but to having a good, meaningful time along the way.

Our core team is **Relja, Tanja and Ivana**, with a quite interesting **network of experts** we love to work and hang out with.



Relja Dereta

Relja has over **15 years of experience of almost daily conducting of trainings and performing** in various areas related to communication and personal expression.

He has worked with over 100 TEDx speakers individually, helping them conceptualize and structure their talks. As a core team member of **Institute Tango Natural, the largest school of Argentine tango in Europe**, he gives classes and performs in regional and European tango events. **He founded the School of Activism** through which hundreds of young people have learned how to design, communicate and turn their ideas into reality.

He has integrated these experiences into the **Reka system** for development of communication skills. **He works with world experts, C-level executives, startup founders, creatives** and all those who need to strategically approach their communication, translate complex ideas into effective messages and inspire and motivate their audience into action.

He is a member of the advisory boards of Civic Initiatives and Creative Mentorship.



Tanja Mirkovic

Tanja has been drawing since the age of 3.

She is graphic designer by education, **artist, adventurer and observer** by nature.

Working in visual industry since 2009. – she **went through multitude work structures and experiences** – from small businesses, through an ad agency, worked as a freelance art director associate, as an educator in graphic design workshops... and currently works as an **art director and illustrator in Epic Assistants**.

She worked as a yoga instructor as well as a traditional thai massage practitioner.

Some of the businesses and clients she worked with and for:

Hivemind, Brave Conscious Marketing, Ribella hummus, Fuchs&Dachs, Guarana energy drink, Touhou Project, Loud and louder agency, NOA



Ivana Andjelkovic

Ivana is interested in [how people learn and relate](#) in business, activism, politics, and personal relationships. She brings a combination of theoretical knowledge, research and training skills to Epic Assistants as [an educator and UX researcher](#).

She holds an [MSc in research psychology](#) (University of Belgrade), an [MA in sociology](#) (University of London) and is a self-taught graphic designer.

She has taught at Educons University (Serbia) and at Petnica Research Station for exceptionally talented high school students (Serbia), as well as giving numerous workshops to activists and freelance creatives. She has worked as a designer/UX researcher in startups in HR and formal education, an inhouse researcher in Telenor and spokesperson and educator in a housing rights activist group.

She has been awarded a [Chevening Scholarship](#) to outstanding emerging leaders by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and a [Žarana Papić Scholarship](#) for female leaders by Reconstruction Women's Fund.

Her favourite pastime activities are studying, knitting, shoe making, archery and doing her PhD.



Contact

Feel free to drop us a line!

hello@epicassistants.com

Here are some questions to help you formulate your team's, employee's or manager's needs:

- What are the biggest challenges they face in communication?
- What outcomes would you love to achieve?



THANK YOU!



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