

STRATEGIC DIPLOMACY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Digital media have altered personal lives, social communities and projected identities to an unprecedented level. The momentum is accelerating, and cannot be ignored by diplomats who advance their national interests with foreign Governments and Peoples.

Mobile media and the Internet provide new sources of insight on specific foreign issues, and new opportunities to comprehensively deliver diplomatic messages by combining online with offline strategies.

This course in **Strategic Diplomacy** builds on 20+ years of research and practice on digital media. The overall aim is to better translate policy-making into effective and understandable communication for today's expanding array of *policy-making influencers*.

RATIONALE

The diplomat of the XXI century has an important new tool at their disposal.

Digital media offer a challenging opportunity to promote national interests in the international arena, and present novel ways to manage conversations and communicate "lines to take." But to do so with sophistication, depth and integrity requires not only a level of technical competency but also an understanding of the wider ecosystem (including the dynamic, sometimes volatile, nature of social media).

As boundaries between personal and social communications shrink, stakeholders have boomed in number. Furthermore, media formats have multiplied in quantity and functionality while segmenting their target audiences. Hence, diplomacy has to be strategic not only in its policy-making, but equally so in the way it uses media.

In result, the diplomat's role and functions need to be revised and accordingly updated. This represents both an opportunity and a threat: any specific message needs in fact to be re-plotted (in terms of both form and content) to reach a wide and varied audience, with potentially disastrous consequences if this is done badly.

That is why a course in *Strategic Diplomacy* is needed now.

AIMS

Attendees will develop skills and competencies in digital diplomacy through modules that combine precepts and practice. They will learn how to:

1. Incorporate into diplomacy the visual and emotional qualities of contemporary communications.
2. Utilise shifting storytelling formats and techniques specifically for diplomatic research and practise.
3. As a result, master the relationship between digital media and public communication, managing the interface to enhance a media-led standpoint for diplomatic practise.

FORMAT

This course is aimed at both junior diplomats seeking to build career progression and senior diplomats looking to broaden their portfolio. As the course is media-informed, it would be equally suited to political advisors and those who support digital communication in that sphere.

The training is tailored to meet individual needs and delivered in seminar format. This allows attendees to identify key personal aims and build on their existing knowledge. Time is given to the transferable nature of elements of the course, e.g. cultural to smart diplomacy, and soft to economic diplomacy.

TUTOR PROFILE

Dr Massimiliano Fusari is a digital consultant, communication scholar and results-driven visual strategist. He has 25 years of experience in the Middle East with linguistic competencies in both Persian and Arabic. He has worked as a multimedia journalist from Morocco to China, and consulted for the Diplomatic Institute of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As Senior Lecturer at the University of Westminster, he teaches on interactive media, visual storytelling and digital creativity. Alongside his media production online platform, massimedia.com, Massimiliano runs two consulting activities, *The Image As Storytelling* and *Strategic Diplomacy*.