The Politics of Misinformation and Fake News Training Course

Professional Development Training Course Outline

Category	Political Science and International Relations	**Duration**	5 Days
Base Fee	$1,500 USD	**Delivery Mode**	Online / On-site Hybrid

Course Introduction

In an era defined by a constant deluge of information, the ability to discern fact from fiction has become a critical skill for navigating public discourse and professional environments. This training course directly addresses the **pervasive threat of misinformation and disinformation**, a phenomenon that erodes trust in institutions, polarizes societies, and undermines democratic processes. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the **modern information ecosystem**, exploring the psychological, political, and technological factors that contribute to the creation and spread of false narratives.

The Politics of Misinformation and Fake News Training Course is designed to empower individuals with the knowledge and practical skills needed to combat **information disorder**. Through a blend of theoretical frameworks and real-world case studies, we will dissect the anatomy of fake news campaigns, from their origins to their viral spread. We will also introduce **cutting-edge tools and methodologies for fact-checking and digital verification**, equipping you to become a proactive agent of truth. By understanding the motivations and tactics behind malicious information, participants will be better prepared to safeguard themselves, their organizations, and their communities against manipulation.

Programme Curriculum

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Course Duration

5 days

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define and differentiate between misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.
- Identify common cognitive biases that make individuals susceptible to believing and sharing false information.
- Analyze the political and social impact of misinformation on public opinion and democracy.
- Recognize key propaganda techniques and manipulation tactics used in modern information warfare.
- Master advanced fact-checking skills using open-source intelligence (OSINT) tools and digital forensics.
- Evaluate the credibility of sources and critically assess content across different media platforms.
- Understand the role of algorithms and social media platforms in the amplification of misinformation.
- Develop effective communication strategies for debunking false narratives without amplifying them.
- Formulate robust organizational policies and frameworks to counter the spread of disinformation.
- Conduct a risk assessment of information threats to protect brand reputation and public trust.
- Implement strategies for building information resilience within teams and communities.
- Examine legal and ethical considerations related to free speech, content moderation, and online harm regulation.
- Apply learned skills to real-world scenarios through case study analysis and practical exercises.

Organizational Benefits

- A proactive approach to combating misinformation protects an organization from reputational damage and reinforces its status as a reliable and trustworthy source of information.
- By equipping staff with the skills to identify and respond to information threats, the organization reduces its vulnerability to misinformation campaigns, which can target its products, services, or leadership.
- Employees who are confident in their ability to navigate the complex information landscape are less likely to be distracted or misled by false rumors, leading to a more focused and secure workforce.
- An information-literate workforce ensures that critical decisions, from marketing to policy, are based on accurate data and credible intelligence.
- The course prepares communication and public relations teams to effectively manage and counter disinformation during a crisis, ensuring that the organization controls its narrative.

Target Audience

- Public Relations and Communications Specialists

- Journalists and Media Professionals
- Policy Analysts and Government Officials
- Marketing and Brand Managers
- Human Resources Professionals
- Social Media Managers and Content Creators
- Educators and Academic Researchers
- Cybersecurity and Intelligence Analysts

Course Outline

Module 1: The Misinformation Landscape

- The Anatomy of Information Disorder: Defining misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.
- Psychological Vulnerabilities: Exploring why we believe false information, focusing on cognitive biases.
- The Historical Context: Tracing the evolution of propaganda from traditional media to digital platforms.
- The Digital Ecosystem: Understanding the role of social media, bots, and algorithms in amplifying false content.
- **Case Study:** The "Pizzagate" Conspiracy Theory. We'll analyze how a fabricated story spread from obscure forums to mainstream media, its real-world consequences, and the psychological factors that fueled its virality.

Module 2: Fact-Checking and Digital Verification

- Principles of Fact-Checking: Sourcing, verification, and triangulation of information.
- Reverse Image Search and Geolocation: Tools and techniques for verifying the origin and context of photos and videos.
- Metadata Analysis: Extracting hidden information from digital files to determine authenticity.
- The Art of Debunking: How to effectively correct false information without inadvertently spreading it further.
- **Case Study:** The "Syrian boy" photo. We'll examine how a photo from a different conflict was used to create a false narrative about a specific event, and how open-source investigation techniques exposed the deception.

Module 3: Political and Social Misinformation

- Misinformation and Elections: The impact of disinformation on political campaigns and voter behavior.
- State-Sponsored Propaganda: Identifying coordinated influence operations by foreign actors.
- Conspiracy Theories: The psychology behind their appeal and their real-world dangers.
- Polarization and Echo Chambers: How social media contributes to political division.
- **Case Study:** The Russian Internet Research Agency (IRA) and the 2016 US election. We will deconstruct how a single organization used social media to sow discord and manipulate public opinion.

Module 4: Health and Scientific Misinformation

- The Infodemic: The spread of medical misinformation during public health crises.
- Anti-Science Movements: Analyzing the tactics used to undermine scientific consensus.
- Risk Communication: Strategies for health organizations to build trust and counter false narratives.
- The Role of Influencers and Micro-communities: How misinformation spreads through trusted social networks.
- **Case Study:** COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation. We'll analyze key false claims, the platforms they spread on, and the public health consequences.

Module 5: The Economics of Misinformation

- Monetizing Clicks: The business models that incentivize the creation of sensational and false content.
- Advertising and Disinformation: How brands can inadvertently fund fake news sites.
- Content Farms and Clickbait: Understanding the ecosystem of low-quality, high-volume misinformation.
- AdTech and Malicious Actors: How programmatic advertising can be exploited by purveyors of disinformation.
- **Case Study:** We'll explore a specific example of a fake news network that generated millions of dollars from misleading ad revenue, tracing the flow of money and identifying the actors involved.

Module 6: Legal and Ethical Challenges

- Free Speech vs. Harmful Content: Navigating the complex debate over content moderation.
- Platform Accountability: The responsibilities of social media companies in regulating speech.
- International Law and Disinformation: Examining how different countries are responding to online harm.
- Journalistic Ethics: The role of the media in a post-truth world.
- **Case Study:** A legal challenge against a social media platform over the spread of hate speech. We will analyze the court's reasoning and its implications for online regulation.

Module 7: Organizational Resilience and Policy

- Developing a Misinformation Response Plan: Creating a protocol for internal and external communication during a crisis.
- Internal Communication Audits: Identifying and mitigating sources of internal misinformation.
- Employee Training Programs: Building a culture of information literacy within the organization.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Working with partners, clients, and the public to build collective resilience.
- **Case Study:** A company's response to a coordinated disinformation campaign targeting its CEO. We'll assess the effectiveness of their crisis communication strategy and a best-practice framework.

Module 8: The Future of Information and AI

- Deepfakes and Synthetic Media: The threat of hyper-realistic forged content.
- Generative AI and Misinformation: How AI can be used to create and spread misinformation at scale.
- Proactive Countermeasures: The role of technology in detecting and preventing AI-generated falsehoods.
- The Human Element: The continuing importance of critical thinking and human judgment.
- **Case Study:** An analysis of a high-profile deepfake video that went viral, examining the techniques used to create it and the methods for its eventual detection.

Training Methodology

This course employs a participatory and hands-on approach to ensure practical learning, including:

- Interactive lectures and presentations.
- Group discussions and brainstorming sessions.
- Hands-on exercises using real-world datasets.
- Role-playing and scenario-based simulations.
- Analysis of case studies to bridge theory and practice.
- Peer-to-peer learning and networking.
- Expert-led Q&A sessions.
- Continuous feedback and personalized guidance.

Register as a group from 3 participants for a Discount

Send us an email: info@fineskilltrainingcenter.org or call *+254769199797*

Certification

Upon successful completion of this training, participants will be issued with a globally- recognized certificate.

Tailor-Made Course

We also offer tailor-made courses based on your needs.

Key Notes

a. The participant must be conversant with English.

b. Upon completion of training the participant will be issued with an Authorized Training Certificate

c. Course duration is flexible and the contents can be modified to fit any number of days.

d. The course fee includes facilitation training materials, 2 coffee breaks, buffet lunch and A Certificate upon successful completion of Training.

e. One-year post-training support Consultation and Coaching provided after the course.

f. Payment should be done at least a week before commence of the training, to Fineskill Training Center account, as indicated in the invoice so as to enable us prepare better for you.

Upcoming Scheduled Sessions

Start Date	End Date	Location	Price
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Online	$1,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$1,500
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$4,500
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Physical	$6,000

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