

Methodological tool: Evaluating communication skills

Number of methodological Tool	EUPA_LO_101_M_001
Work Area Code and Title	WA 3: Communication and social, telephone handling, code of conduct, equal opportunities and relationships
Unit Code and Title	4.1 Use of business communication skills to generate solutions in specific situations
Learning Outcome Number and Title	LO101. Demonstrate ability to interact with others effectively and efficiently, and generate solutions in specific situations through the use of effective communication techniques
Objective of the methodological tool	After the completion of this activity, participants will be able to: Assess and evaluate their own and their colleagues'/team's communication skills
Approximate Time needed for the completion of this exercise	20 min.
Individual or group exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group
Type of methodological tool	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written exercise <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Video analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Simulation <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple choice <input type="checkbox"/> Group exercise with cards <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise using ICT <input type="checkbox"/> Role play <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Case study <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Group Work
Description of the exercise/Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give each participant a copy of the communication skills evaluation questionnaire 2. After they have completed it, start commenting on each question and their answers, by taking into account the remarks made in the solution below for each question
Exercise is accompanied by	EUPA_LO_101_M_001_Att_1
Exercise solution	Questions 2 & 11 Before you start communicating, take a moment to figure out what

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	<p>you want to say, and why. Don't waste your time conveying information that isn't necessary – and don't waste the listener or reader's time either. Too often, people just keep talking or keep writing – because they think that by saying more, they'll surely cover all the points. Often, however, all they do is confuse the people they're talking to.</p> <p>To plan your communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand your objective. Why are you communicating?• Understand your audience. With whom are you communicating? What do they need to know?• Plan what you want to say, and how you'll send the message.• Seek feedback on how well your message was received. <p>When you do this, you'll be able to craft a message that will be received positively by your audience.</p> <p>Good communicators use the KISS ("Keep It Simple and Straightforward") principle. They know that less is often more, and that good communication should be efficient as well as effective.</p> <p>Questions 1, 5, 8, 10, 15</p> <p>When you know what you want to say, decide exactly how you'll say it. You're responsible for sending a message that's clear and concise. To achieve this, you need to consider not only what you'll say, but also how you think the recipient will perceive it.</p> <p>We often focus on the message that we want to send, and the way in which we'll send it. But if our message is delivered without considering the other person's perspective, it's likely that part of that message will be lost. To communicate more effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand what you truly need and want to say.• Anticipate the other person's reaction to your message.• Choose words and body language that allow the other person to really hear what you're saying. <p>With written communication, make sure that what you write will be perceived the way you intend. Words on a page generally have no emotion – they don't "smile" or "frown" at you while you're reading them (unless you're a very talented writer, of course!)</p> <p>When writing, take time to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review your style.• Avoid jargon or slang.• Check your grammar and punctuation.• Check also for tone, attitude, nuance, and other subtleties. If you think the message may be misunderstood, it probably
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	<p>will. Take the time to clarify it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiarize yourself with your company's writing policies. <p>Another important consideration is to use pictures, charts, and diagrams wherever possible. As the saying goes, "a picture speaks a thousand words." Our article on charts and graphs has some great tips that help you to use these to communicate clearly.</p> <p>Also, whether you speak or write your message, consider the cultural context. If there's potential for miscommunication or misunderstanding due to cultural or language barriers, address these issues in advance. Consult with people who are familiar with these, and do your research so that you're aware of problems you may face. See our article on Effective Cross-Culture Communication for more help.</p> <p>Questions 7, 11, 13</p> <p>Along with encoding the message, you need to choose the best communication channel to use to send it. You want to be efficient, and yet make the most of your communication opportunity.</p> <p>Using email to send simple directions is practical. However, if you want to delegate a complex task, an email will probably just lead to more questions, so it may be best to arrange a time to speak in person. And if your communication has any negative emotional content, stay well away from email! Make sure that you communicate face to face or by phone, so that you can judge the impact of your words and adjust these appropriately.</p> <p>When you determine the best way to send a message, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sensitivity and emotional content of the subject.• How easy it is to communicate detail.• The receiver's preferences.• Time constraints.• The need to ask and answer questions. <p>Questions 3, 6, 12, 14</p> <p>It can be easy to focus on speaking; we want to get our points out there, because we usually have lots to say. However, to be a great communicator, you also need to step back, let the other person talk, and just listen.</p> <p>This doesn't mean that you should be passive. Listening is hard work, which is why effective listening is called active listening. To listen actively, give your undivided attention to the speaker:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at the person.• Pay attention to his or her body language.• Avoid distractions.• Nod and smile to acknowledge points.• Occasionally think back about what the person has said.• Allow the person to speak, without thinking about what you'll say next.• Don't interrupt. <p>Empathic listening also helps you decode a message accurately. To understand a message fully, you have to understand the emotions and underlying feelings the speaker is expressing. This is where an understanding of body language can be useful.</p> <p>Questions 4, 9</p> <p>You need feedback, because without it, you can't be sure that people have understood your message. Sometimes feedback is verbal, and sometimes it's not. We've looked at the importance of asking questions and listening carefully. However, feedback through body language is perhaps the most important source of clues to the effectiveness of your communication. By watching the facial expressions, gestures, and posture of the person you're communicating with, you can spot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confidence levels.• Defensiveness.• Agreement.• Comprehension (or lack of understanding).• Level of interest.• Level of engagement with the message.• Truthfulness (or lying/dishonesty). <p>As a speaker, understanding your listener's body language can give you an opportunity to adjust your message and make it more understandable, appealing, or interesting. As a listener, body language can show you more about what the other person is saying. You can then ask questions to ensure that you have, indeed, understood each other. In both situations, you can better avoid miscommunication if it happens.</p> <p>Feedback can also be formal. If you're communicating something really important, it can often be worth asking questions of the person you're talking to make sure that they've understood fully. And if you're receiving this sort of communication, repeat it in your own words to check your understanding.</p>
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	<p>Key Points</p> <p>It can take a lot of effort to communicate effectively. However, you need to be able to communicate well if you're going to make the most of the opportunities that life has to offer.</p> <p>By learning the skills you need to communicate effectively, you can learn how to communicate your ideas clearly and effectively, and understand much more of the information that's conveyed to you.</p> <p>As either a speaker or a listener, or as a writer or a reader, you're responsible for making sure that the message is communicated accurately. Pay attention to words and actions, ask questions, and watch body language. These will all help you ensure that you say what you mean, and hear what is intended.</p>
Other comments to the trainer	N/A