BSBXCM401
Apply communication strategies in the workplace

Participant Workbook

BSBXCM401 - Apply communication strategies in the workplace (Release 1)

Overseas Student Information

If you are an overseas student and you have a problem with your school or college that you haven't been able to fix, the Overseas Students Ombudsman might be able to help. The Ombudsman is a free complaint investigation service, available to people on student visas who are studying with private providers. You can read more about what the Ombudsman does, or make a complaint online, by visiting www.ombudsman.gov.au.

Copying for Educational Purposes

The Australian Copyright Act 1968 allows 10% of this resource to be copied by any educational institute for educational purposes, provided that the institute (or the body that administers it) has given a remuneration notice to the Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) under the Act. For more information, email info@copyright.com.au or visit www.copyright.com.au for other contact details.

Disclaimer

Precision Group (Australia) has made a great effort to ensure that this material is free from error or omissions. However, you should conduct your own enquiries and seek professional advice before relying on any fact, statement or matter contained in this document. Precision Group (Australia) is not responsible for any injury, loss or damage as a result of resource included or omitted from this material. Information in this course material is current at the time of publication.

Version Control & Document History

Date	Summary of modifications	Version
13 October 2020	Version 1 final produced following assessment validation.	1.0

Table of Contents

About the Business Services Training Package

The BSB Business Services Training Package covers a diverse range of industries and occupations. Business Services covers a range of cross-industry functions and services supporting the commercial activities of all industries.

Defining Qualifications

When units of competency are grouped into combinations that meet workplace roles, they are called qualifications. These qualifications are aligned to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Each qualification will have 'packaging rules' which establish the number of core units, number and source of elective units and overall requirements for delivering the qualification.

Delivery and Assessment of Qualifications

RTOs must have the qualifications (or specific units of competency) on their scope to deliver nationally recognised training and assessment. RTOs are governed by and must comply with the requirements established by applicable national frameworks and standards. RTOs must ensure that training and assessment complies with the relevant standards.

Qualification Training Pathways

A pathway is the route or course of action taken to get to a destination. A training pathway is the learning required to attain the competencies to achieve career goals. Everyone has different needs and goals, and therefore requires a personalised and individual training pathway.

Foundation Skills

Foundation Skills are the non-technical skills that support the individual's participation in the workplace, in the community and in education and training.

Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)

This Assessment meets the five ACSF core skills as described in the Foundation Skills mapping.

About this Unit of Competency

BSBXCM401 - Apply communication strategies in the workplace

This unit standard BSBXCM401 Apply Communication Strategies in the Workplace covers the skills and knowledge required to facilitate and apply communication strategies in the workplace within any industry.

This unit has a specific focus on the communication skills required for supervisor level workers with responsibility for other workers.

This Learner Resource is broken up into four elements. These include:

1. **Prepare for communication**

2. **Use communication strategies to provide work instruction**

3. **Facilitate workplace communication**

4. **Monitor and support team communication**

At the end of this training, you will be asked to complete an assessment pack for this unit of competency. You will need to access a supervisor, a manager, or your assessor who can observe you perform project or workplace tasks and verify your competency or performance.

On competent completion of the assessment, you must have demonstrated skills and knowledge required to apply communication strategies in the workplace.

Chapter 1: Prepare for Communication

Applying communication strategies in the workplace is a necessary undertaking that will enable any organisation to operate efficiently and effectively. If done correctly, your organisation becomes better equipped to achieve its goals and objectives. This undertaking requires continuous work and effort. Much like any other venture, it begins with the planning stage.

For you to successfully employ communication strategies within your organisation, you must first prepare for communication. This stage involves five sub-steps. First, you must identify the work activities that would require communication. After this, you must likewise establish the communication requirements for your identified work activities.

Once you have accomplished these preliminary steps, you can move on to identifying communication roles for yourself and others to complete the necessary activities. You must also consider seeking assistance or clarification regarding communication objectives as required. Finally, you must select the appropriate method of communicating information internally and externally based on your organisational requirements.

1.1 Identify Work Activities Requiring Communication

The first stage in applying communication strategies in your workplace is preparing for communication. This involves the necessary planning that will enable you to engage in communicating effectively. The first order of business in your planning process is the identification of work activities which require communication, which is essentially the transfer or sharing of information.

In essence, every interaction you will ever engage in requires some form of communication. The same goes in the workplace, where interactions are at the core of your operations. There are key work activities, however, which are done in every organisation. These activities especially require communication. The following merit further discussion:

▪ **Reporting**

Reporting is an integral activity that is done to present details of various undertakings. In the context of the workplace, reporting is an activity that may be done before, during, and after projects, meetings, etc. These would provide summaries, progress updates, and other important pieces of information necessary to assess the work being done in the organisation.

Reports can be done in various ways. One may opt to present their report through a formal document (i.e. a report), through electronically assisted means (i.e. email or instant message), or through face-to-face interaction (i.e. presentation).

- **Coordinating with Clients**

Every business has clients, and this is the reason why coordinating with clients is a work activity fundamental to all organisations. Coordinating with clients involves external communication, which is the interaction with people outside of the organisation. This activity is done to ensure that the needs of a client are understood and met sufficiently.

Like reporting, this activity is done during different points in your undertaking (i.e. before, after, and during a project). Coordinating with clients can also be done through face-to-face interaction or digital means.

- **Meetings and Consultations**

Perhaps the most important work activity one can engage in, meetings are a key part of the operations of every organisation. You can have different kinds of meetings for various purposes – everything from planning to the evaluation of your different work-related functions and activities. These meetings can be attended by various stakeholders – both internal and external – and can be as small or as large, as necessary. Thanks to technology, you are no longer limited to having meetings in person. You can now have video conferences as meetings as well.

A special and likewise important type of meeting that is required from every organisation is consultation. Consultation is the process of formal discussion and collaboration with at least one other person. This is done to help you identify key information necessary for various organisational matters (i.e. challenges, issues, perceptions, trends) and determine what can be done about these matters to improve operations.

- **Training Initiatives**

Training is a work activity that is vital in every organisation. This is because all workplaces are composed of people, and these people must be sufficiently trained so that they can fulfil the work tasks expected of them. For the most part, training initiatives require internal communication. However, there are instances when professional help or assistance is required. This is especially true when the specific skills or knowledge to be taught seek the expertise of industry leaders and/or experienced trainers.

There are several training initiatives that employees can engage in throughout their careers. These include everything from induction activities that are designed to help them learn about their roles and the organisation to specific training sessions that enable employees to expand their skillset and continuously develop themselves and their careers.

1.2 Establish Communication Requirements for Identified Work Activities

Now that you have identified your different work activities, you can sufficiently determine the communication requirements for each. Given the varying natures of the work activities you engage in, different communication requirements emerge.

Your communication requirements are essentially an overview of the different needs you have in communicative interaction. The basis of establishing your communication requirements is, therefore, the nature of the activities you are to engage in. In essence, the determination of your communication requirements is done by seeking answers to the question: 'What do you need to successfully engage in communication in a given work activity?'

Generally speaking, the different communication requirements for each work activity are as follows:

- **Information Requirement**

  Your information requirement or need is essentially the pieces of information expected from an information source. These are the matters that need to be shared and discussed through your communication. Information requirements would vary depending on the nature of your work activities.

  Sample information requirements for each identified work activity include:

  o **Reporting**

    When reporting, there is a variety of information you may require. This would be dependent on what you are reporting on. The most common information requirements include goals and objectives, budgets, sales projections, issues and subsequent resolutions, system changes, updates or adjustments, project updates and results, etc.

  o **Coordinating with Clients**

    In coordinating with clients, the most important thing to do is make sure that you and the client are on the same page; this is why the different information requirements you have would cover a variety of matters. These include product details and specifications, agreed-upon timelines and deadlines, project updates, delays, and problems encountered.

  o **Meetings and Consultations**

    As with reporting, there is a variety of information your meetings and consultations may require. The most common of these include project updates, timelines and deadlines, organisational requirements (i.e. goals and objectives, policies and procedures, codes of conduct) and subsequent changes to these, conflict, and conflict resolution.

o **Training Initiatives**

There are many information requirements depending on the kind of training you engage in. For one, induction training activities would need job roles and applications, organisational requirements (i.e. goals and objectives, policies and procedures, codes of conduct), processes, and house rules. Other training sessions, such as those geared and developing specific skills for employees, would likewise require information such as technical guidance, in-depth details, processes, rules, procedures, techniques, etc.

- **Audience**

In every communication activity, there needs to be an audience that one intends to communicate with. The audience is the recipient of the message/s you send; they are the ones you are trying to reach out to for any given interaction. As with any other communicative activity, your audiences vary depending on your work activity.

Sample audiences for each identified work activity include:

o **Reporting**

The audience of your reporting would depend on the purpose of your report. Two specific audiences can be identified, however, as they are the most common target audiences of your reports. First, supervisors, managers and other higher-ups are the usual audiences of internal reports. Reporting is usually done to inform those in higher positions of the different matters that they ought to be aware of. This is because they themselves do not always have the time to get directly involved in every work-related process. Second, clients are also a common target audience for your reports. By virtue of being clients, they require sufficient updates and information on the projects they have a stake on.

- o **Coordinating with Clients**

    As the name would suggest, the main audience for your coordination with clients would be the clients themselves. Different clients may have different attitudes and personalities, and this is something you will need to note as you communicate with them. Further guidance on this is provided later in this resource.

- o **Meetings and Consultations**

    This is perhaps the work activity with the widest range of possible audiences. Given that meetings and consultations can be done for a variety of reasons, your target audience for every meeting may change. This may include everyone from members of your team and department, employees across different departments, supervisors, and other higher-ups. On the external side, your audiences may also include clients, suppliers, consultants, and subject-matter experts.

- o **Training Initiatives**

    Your training initiatives usually involve employees who require guidance for various matters. This would include new hires that need to learn the ropes of the company, employees that are struggling with certain tasks, as well as those who would like to expand their skillset and expertise.

- ▪ **Other Requirements**

Along with these identified requirements, there are a number of others that you may encounter as you engage in different work activities. This would include your documents, visual aids, and prompts as well as the different technologies you may need to supplement your activities. These are necessary to ensure that you are able to make your communication as effective as possible.

1.3 Identify Communication Roles for Self and Others to Complete Activity

Along with your communication requirements, you must identify the different roles that you and others must fulfil in each activity. In the process of doing so, you must also assign these roles and articulate them sufficiently to the necessary personnel.

1.3.1 Communication Roles Defined

In essence, communication roles refer to the part a person plays in a communication activity. This role would involve the different tasks they have during a given activity that involve communication. For each of the previously identified work activities, there are a number of communication roles that can be recognised.

- **Reporting**

  In reporting, the main roles of those engaged in the activity are the reporter and listener or audience. The reporter is the person in charge of presenting the information that needs to be conveyed. The listener or audience is the person who needs to know about this information. In some cases, the reporter/s may need help from key persons. This may include subject-matter experts who can further substantiate the data being presented. Sometimes, those in the audience may also include observers or approvers who are evaluating the performance of the reporters and the merit of the report, respectively.

- **Coordinating with Clients**

When coordinating with clients, the two main communication roles represent the two parties engaged in the activity: the business and the client. You and any other employee you are with represent the former. As the name would suggest, the client and any other party they are with represent the latter. Your role is to ensure that the interests of the business are given sufficient consideration. This means you have enough allowance for working on the given undertaking with respect to the other work you need to fulfil. On the other hand, the role of the client is to make sure that their own interests are still paid attention to and balanced with the concerns of the business.

- **Meetings and Consultations**

In meetings, there are several communication roles that are to be fulfilled by the attendees. First, there is the chair who is in charge of facilitating the entire activity. They are tasked with managing the flow of the meeting and ensuring that everything goes as planned. There is also the note-keeper who records the minutes of the meeting and consolidates the information into a formal document later on. Meetings may also have timekeepers who are tasked to ensure that the meeting starts and ends on time and that all matters in the agenda are given sufficient discussion time.

In consultations, a special communication role may be given to subject-matter experts who can provide relevant and credible information that would enhance the consultation process.

- **Training Initiatives**

Although there are different types of training initiatives, there are two main roles in each one. The first is that of the trainer. This may be fulfilled by one or more persons who will be providing the necessary training and development to the employees. The second role is that of the trainee, which is fulfilled by the employees who require training.

1.3.2 Assigning Communication Roles

Although there is no one strict way to assign communication roles for your different work activities, there is a general process for doing so. The steps involved in assigning communication roles are as follows:

Define communication roles

Identify viable personnel

Assign and explain communication roles

Engage in work activity
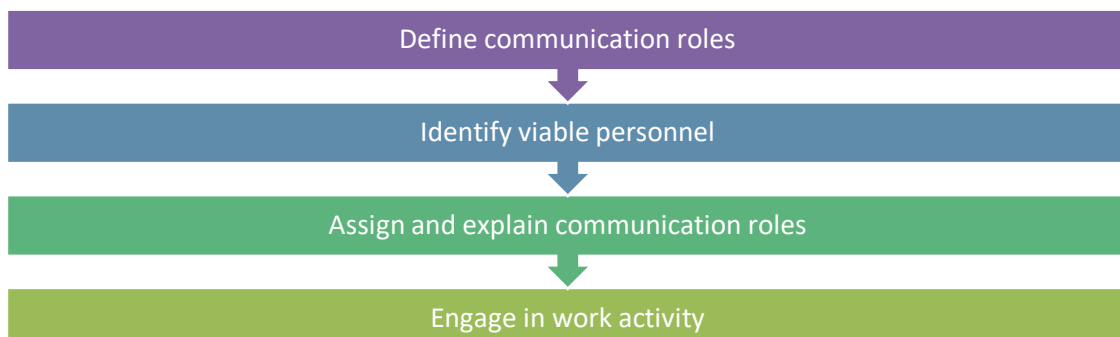
1. **Define communication roles**

   The first step in assigning communication roles is to determine what the required roles for your work activity are. In doing so, you will note the different tasks that you may need in any given activity. The discussion above may provide guidance for the roles that are associated with the most common work activities.

2. **Identify viable personnel**

   Once you have determined the communication roles necessary for your activities, you must then identify who will be able to fulfil the given roles. This is especially important for roles that require a certain skill set or level of expertise. As you identify the viable internal and/or external personnel who can be assigned to the different roles, you must also consider their availability to fulfil the role. For instance, if you are trying to reach out to a subject-matter expert, they may not be available to engage in your activity if they have prior commitments scheduled.

3. **Assign and explain communication roles**

   After identifying your communication roles and the personnel who can fulfil these, you can assign them their roles. Along with assigning the communication roles, you must ensure that you are able to sufficiently explain said roles. This is to make sure that they are understood and be fulfilled properly.

4. **Engage in work activity**

   Now that you have everything set, you can engage in your work activity and subsequently have the personnel fulfil their respective communication roles. As you do, ensure that everyone assigned is able to properly do their assigned tasks and that the activity runs smoothly.

1.4 Seek Assistance or Clarification Regarding Communication Objectives as Required

As you prepare for communication, you may find it necessary to seek clarity on the objectives of your different communication tasks. If such is the case, you will need to seek out the necessary assistance or clarification from key personnel.

1.4.1 Communication Objectives Defined

Communication objectives are the aims that you are trying to achieve as you engage in different work activities. These are grounded on the messages that you intend to send to those you are communicating with. Unlike most organisational objectives, your communication objectives need not be strictly set up to be SMART – that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based. You can use the SMART criteria to guide you in writing more precise objectives, but the ones you come up with need not be too technical.

In hindsight, your communication objectives simply need to provide you with a clear idea of what you want to happen during your communication activity along with when it should happen. To better illustrate this concept, the following examples are provided for the different identified work activities:

Reporting
- To discuss project updates for the entire month
- To report issues and concerns raised in the past week

Coordinating with Clients
- To come up with a timetable for the project
- To finalise the budget for the project

Meetings and Consultations
- To learn about the work health and safety concerns of employees for the past month
- To brainstorm ideas for a new project

Training Initiatives
- To teach newly hired employees about company policies and procedures
- To teach employees about the use of a new software being adapted by the organisation

1.4.2 Seeking Assistance or Clarification on Communication Objectives

Sometimes, the objectives you come up with may not sufficiently align with the overarching project goals you have. As such, you must seek assistance or clarification from relevant personnel. This would include colleagues as well as higher-ups who have experience or knowledge regarding your communication activity that would help them guide you in determining what your objectives should be. In seeking their aid, you must simply approach them and ask them for their guidance.

1.5 Select Appropriate Method of Communicating Information Internally and Externally Based on Organisational Requirements

The final step in preparing for communication involves the selection of the appropriate methods of communicating information internally and externally. To do so sufficiently, you must take into consideration the different organisational requirements with which you must align your communication.

1.5.1 Methods of Communication

The main difference between internal and external communication is the receiver of the information you intend to send. As the name would suggest, internal communication involves the interaction between or among members of the organisation. On the other hand, external communication occurs between organisational members and external stakeholders (e.g. clients). For both types of communication, you have a variety of methods you can use to reach out to those you intend to communicate with. These include verbal and written forms discussed below.

- **Verbal Communication**

  Also referred to as 'oral communication,' verbal communication methods involve actual conversations between or among communicators. These methods make use of spoken words to transmit information. For both internal and external communication, verbal communication can be done through the following methods:

  o **Face-to-face Conversations**

    Perhaps the most common method of verbal communication, face-to-face conversations occur every single day. This may be both informal or formal, meaning conversations may or may not have strict agendas to follow. They may be brief and in passing or extensive and planned.

  o **Telephones**

    The use of telephones to communicate may sound outdated, but such is still a reliable method of communication that is widely used in various companies. Most offices have telephones set up in almost every table, allowing employees to communicate with each other internally. Moreover, telephones may also be used to reach out to external stakeholders who have made their telephone numbers available.

o **Mobiles**

Mobiles are a method of communication that have emerged in recent years. They have come to replace traditional telephones and are especially useful for reaching out to external stakeholders quickly and easily. Unlike the wired telephone, the compact and wireless design of mobile phones makes them easy to bring along even outside the office premises. This makes it easier to contact employees you want to reach out to when you are away.

o **Video Conferences**

Thanks to technology and the internet, you no longer have to rely on face-to-face conversations to verbally communicate with others. Video conference is an emerging communication method that allows you to hold virtual meetings with everyone – from remote workers and employees who are away to customers who are in hard-to-reach locations. All you need to facilitate this method of communication is the right equipment and a stable internet connection.

▪ **Written Communication**

As the name would suggest, written communication methods involve the use of writing to send messages. Unlike verbal communication, written communication tends to be stricter and more formal. These methods of communication also face the disadvantage of having delays since they must first be sent and read by the receiver. However, a clear advantage of written communication is that it produces an output that both senders and receivers can refer to at any point after it has been sent. For both internal and external communication, written communication can be done through the following methods:

o **Emails**

Perhaps the most popular method of communicating in the workplace, emails are used for everything from scheduling meetings with employees and clients to submitting proposals, contracts, and project outputs. As a general rule of thumb, the use of email has a formal undertone. It is a reliable method for reaching out to any number of people, both internally and externally.

o **SMS**

Text messaging, also known as using short message service (SMS), is another trend that has emerged with the use of mobile phones. The use of SMS has enabled the rise of speedy communication between and among employees and their clients as well. This comes in handy when you need a quick response from someone who may not have access to their email or cannot take a call.

o **Social Media**

Social media is another emerging form of communication that enables you to reach out to external stakeholders through different websites and platforms that facilitate content sharing and creation. The biggest advantage of this communication method is that it allows the receivers of messages to engage with the material that you release. This makes communication more meaningful and interactive.

1.5.2 Organisational Requirements Relevant to Workplace Communication

To ensure that you select your communication methods appropriately in every activity you may have, you must have a key understanding of your organisational requirements. These requirements underlie all organisations, and all your efforts must be aligned with these.

▪ **Organisational Goals**

Organisational goals are essential to all businesses. These goals represent the long-term aspirations of your organisation. All communication efforts must remain relevant to your organisational goals. If they fail to align with these, they become unnecessary and can be considered nothing more than noise.

▪ **Organisational Objectives**

Your organisational objectives are short-term aims aligned with organisational goals. When achieved, these enable you to realise your overarching goals. Organisational objectives must be set up to be SMART – that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based.

- **Policies and Procedures**

  Organisational policies and procedures work hand in hand. They guide employees in performing their roles and ensure that all efforts are aligned with organisational goals and objectives. Policies are rules and guidelines while procedures are the logical and clearly defined action steps that tell you how to enact your policies. Organisations have policies and procedures that would regulate communications within the organisation.

- **Protocols**

  Protocols are another organisational requirement worth discussing. These refer to the set of rules and standards your organisation prescribes to make sure that decisions are made in line with best practice. They are closely related to your procedures as your protocols essentially define the steps – the procedures – that employees are to follow to satisfactorily accomplish given tasks. Organisations would have communication protocols to instruct employees on how to best communicate in the organisation.

- **Codes of Conduct**

  Similar to workplace policies, codes of conduct within your organisation are a set of rules that outline the accepted norms employees must adhere to. Codes of conduct are more focused than policies, providing guidance on how employees should act in specific situations. Your organisation would have codes that teach employees acceptable ways to communicate in various scenarios.

- **Organisational Reputation and Culture**

  The final organisational requirements you must consider as you communicate are your reputation and culture. The reputation of your organisation refers to the way stakeholders – both internal and external – perceive the organisation. It is important to maintain a positive reputation so that people are more inclined to engage in business with your company. The way you communicate both internally and externally would influence the way your organisation is perceived. As such, it is crucial to keep communication efforts aligned with your goals, objectives, and desired image.

  Organisational culture, on the other hand, is the system of shared beliefs, values, and behaviours within an organisation. Communication is perhaps the most visible manifestation of organisational culture, and different organisations have different cultures for workplace communication. This reflects in the use of language, styles, and tones shared among employees as well as the practices in place to promote communication.

1.5.3 Legislative Requirements Relevant to Workplace Communication

Along with your internal requirements, you must consider the external requirements relevant to your workplace teams. These come in the form of legislation that has an impact on your communication. Legislation refers to the collective laws that give definitive guidelines for organisations to follow and the corresponding penalties should you fail to comply. Relevant pieces of legislation include:

- **Anti-Discrimination Laws**

    In Australia, there are several laws in place that protect minorities from discrimination. It is illegal to discriminate anyone on the basis of age, race, gender, sex, and disability. Anti-discrimination laws are applicable in several areas of one's public life, including employment. To comply with these, your organisation may reinforce internal regulations in the form of policies, procedures, and codes of conduct. Along with these, you must also ensure that your communications promote equality and respect towards everyone.

    Further Reading

    To read more on anti-discrimination laws, visit the sites below.

    Age Discrimination Act 2004

    Disability Discrimination Act 1992

    Racial Discrimination Act 1975

    Sex Discrimination Act 1984

- **Privacy Act 1988**

    The Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) is a law that aims to protect and promote the privacy of individuals. It is particularly concerned about how Australian Government agencies and organisations handle personal information. One particular section of the law merits further discussion as it discusses the use of personal information.

    o **Part II, Division 2, Section 16A**

        This section discusses the situations where it is permittable to share personal information. It is particularly significant because, by default, the sharing and usage of others' personal information should not be done without their consent.

The section recognises seven permitted general situations, these are:

To lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual's life, health or safety, or to public health or safety	To take appropriate action in relation to suspected unlawlful activity or serious misconduct	To locate a missing person
To assert a legal or equitable claim	To conduct an alternative dispute resolution process	To perform diplomatic or consular functions [this permitted general situation only applies to agencies]
	To conduct specified Defence Force activities [this permitted general situation only applies to the Defence Force]	

Further Reading

To read more on this piece of legislation, visit the site below.

Privacy Act 1988

▪ **Work Health and Safety Act 2011**

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act) is a law that aims to protect the health, safety, and welfare of employees in the workplace. This piece of legislation protects all kinds of workers as well as other individuals who may be affected by the work being accomplished by these workers. The WHS Act outlines requirements every business must provide. These include:

Consultation with workers	Incident notification	Inspector powers and functions
Issue resolution	Offences and penalties	

It is important to note that when it comes to incident notification, the WHS Act provides guidance on the information that must be provided to regulators. This includes the specific information you must give through either oral or written form.

For instance, if you are giving notice via telephone, you must give the details of the incident as requested by the regulator. If required, you must also provide written notice of the incident within 48 hours of that requirement being made.
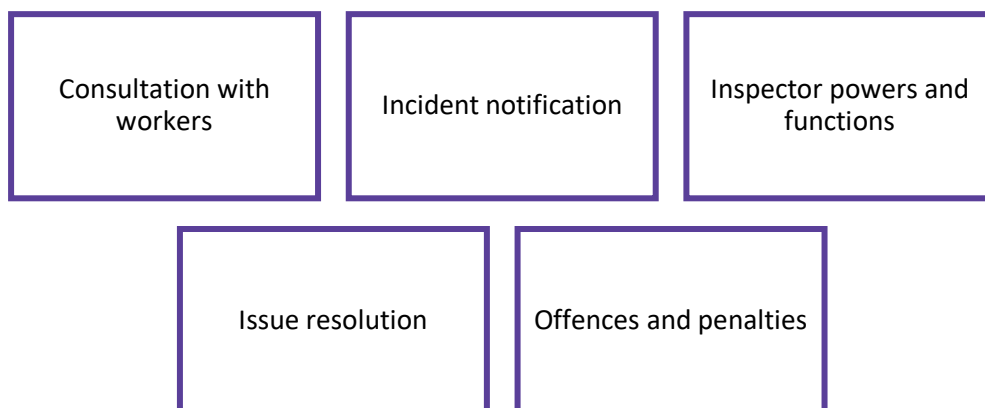
Further Reading

To read more on this piece of legislation, visit the site below.

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

1.5.4 Selecting the Appropriate Communication Method

When it comes to selecting the appropriate verbal and written communication methods, there are several factors you must take into account. Your two main considerations are the audience and the type of information that you must communicate. More specific guidance on this includes:

Verbal Communication
- Often used for scenarios that require more in-depth discussion and feedback
- Preferred for instances that require the use of auditory language to communicate information
- Includes brainstorming, presentations, and group meetings

Written Communication
- Suited for scenarios that require the sharing of direct or explicit information
- Preferred for instances that require the use of written language to communicate information
- Includes sending documents, sharing, and making announcements

Activity 1

You are trying to reach out to customers to do determine their interest in a new product you are developing. Identify one communication method you can use in doing so and briefly explain why this is appropriate to use.

Communication Method	
Why this is appropriate to use	

Notes

Key Points: Chapter 1

- There are key work activities done in every organisation, and all of these require communication.

- These integral work activities include reporting, coordinating with clients, meetings, consultations, and training initiatives.

- There are different communication requirements for each identified work activity that you must sufficiently prepare for.

- You must properly identify as well as assign communication roles to yourself and to others to complete your identified work activities satisfactorily.

- You must properly establish the communication objectives of your work activities and seek assistance or clarification regarding these, as necessary.

- You must select the appropriate verbal and/or written communication method for reaching out to internal and/or external stakeholders.

- Your selection of communication methods must be aligned with the relevant organisational and legislative requirements.

Chapter 1 – 'True' or 'False' Quiz

Tick 'True' if the statement is correct, and 'False' if not.	True	False
Your communication requirements for different work activities include the information requirement and audience as well as other requirements that would supplement your activity.	☐	☐
A communication role is a part that a person plays in a communication activity. This involves different communication tasks one must accomplish during said activity.	☐	☐
The relevant personnel who can assist and help clarify the communication objectives of your activities are your superiors.	☐	☐
Internal communication is the interaction between or among members of the organisation, while external communication occurs between organisational members and external stakeholders.	☐	☐
Your organisation should have policies and procedures to regulate communications and codes to teach employees how to communicate in various scenarios.	☐	☐
Verbal communication is often used for scenarios that require the sharing of direct or explicit information.	☐	☐

Chapter 2: Use Communication Strategies to Provide Work Instruction

Having sufficiently prepared for communication, you can now move on to the next order of business involved in applying communication strategies in the workplace. This second stage is to establish the communication requirements for the work activities you have identified. To ensure that you are sufficiently prepared to engage in workplace communication, you must use communication strategies to provide work instruction.

Using communication strategies to provide work instruction involves three sub-steps. First, you must use appropriate presentation methods to communicate information or instruction. Your selection of such methods will be based on the requirements of your audience. Likewise, you must use the appropriate methods of communication to communicate information or instruction based on the requirements of your audience. Finally, you must negotiate expected work requirements with others and clarify that the instructions that you have provided have been sufficiently understood.

2.1 Use Appropriate Presentation Methods to Communicate Information or Instruction Based on the Requirements of Audience

The first step in using communication strategies to provide work instruction involves presentation methods. More specifically, this means using the appropriate presentation method to communicate information or instructions. Though the two are closely related, there is a fundamental difference between them. Information is concerned with descriptive knowledge, often meant to be learned in passing. On the other hand, instructions are procedural, involving steps and guidance on how something must be done.

2.1.1 Presentation Methods Defined

Presentation methods are the different means through which you provide information and/or instructions to an audience. There are a variety of methods you can choose from, but the most important thing to remember is that your selection must be appropriate to your audience.

As has been previously mentioned, your audience is the intended recipient of the messages you send when you communicate. It is important to have a key understanding of your audience, for they are the ones you are communicating with after all.

One aspect of your audience you must make an effort to recognise is their requirements. Audience requirements are essentially the factors you need to consider when communicating information or instructions. To select your presentation method appropriately, you must consider what would work best for the audience you are presenting to.

Given this, there are three presentation methods which merit further discussion.

2.1.2 Formal Presentation

Formal presentations are a fundamental method of communicating in every business. In general, a presentation is considered formal when you are formally asked to present ideas or information to an individual or a group of people. Along with this invitation, presentations are deemed formal when they are conducted in formal situations (e.g. formal meetings, workshops, forums, etc.). Thanks to the internet, formal presentations are no longer limited to face-to-face meetings; you can now have presentations online as well.

Along with these conditions, you as a formal presenter are given sufficient time to prepare for the engagement and are also made aware of the rules or requirements you have to consider in your planning stage. The formal presentation method follows a strict format and has a defined purpose. Given this, it is important that you sufficiently prepare for the engagement. Steps in doing so would include:

- **Establish clearly defined goals**

  In line with what has been discussed in the previous chapter, it is important that you set clear goals for your formal presentation. Given the nature of your presentation method, the ability to establish clearly defined goals becomes even more significant. This is because the presentation method is stricter than less formal presentation methods.

- **Conduct research**

  You are given sufficient time to prepare, and you should use it to conduct research for your presentation. The research you must conduct is two-fold. First, it is important that the materials you present are well-researched. Take the time to guarantee that your information and/or instruction comes from reliable sources and that the content you present is as complete and detailed as possible.

  Along with this, you must take time to research your audience. As has been mentioned in the previous sub-section, it is important to have a key understanding of the audience you will be presenting to. Sufficient knowledge of your audience will enable you to make your presentation as effective as possible. Things you must know about your audience include:

Number of audience members	Knowledge level of audience members	Cultural factors (i.e. age, race, gender, sex, etc.)

▪ **Organise delivery of presentation**

Formal presentations need to be well-prepared and well-rehearsed. As such, you have to make sure that your presentation follows a well-thought-of outline that flows well. Your presentation needs to be properly organised. This will benefit not only you but also your audience. Having a well-organised presentation makes it easier for you to plan and understand how you will communicate your content. Likewise, your audience will find it easier to understand your presentation.

▪ **Prepare visual aids and prompts**

An integral part of your formal presentation involves the use of visual aids and prompts. These materials will supplement your presentation and make it easier for the audience to understand the points you are trying to make. Perhaps the most popular visual aid used in presentations is the PowerPoint presentation. However, the proper use of this visual aid is often overlooked by most people.

To improve your presentation, you must be aware of several tips and tricks that will make your PowerPoint presentations more effective and visually appealing. Guidance on this includes:

o Optimise the use of white space.

o Increase the readability of slides by using no more than three to five bullet points per slide and keeping each bullet point to a line of text.

o Ensure the relevance of visuals in your presentation; use images only when they aid the text in a given slide.

Along with the use of visual aids, you must also be sufficiently aware of key techniques in using visual prompts to enhance your PowerPoint presentation. These are techniques that will assist your audience to do something or direct their attention to specific points of a presentation. Visual cues include:

Highlighting or underlining key points of slides or presentation	Using title cards to indicate transitions in the focus of your presentation	Including signs to indicate actions that can be done by the audience

2.1.3 Informal Meetings and Instructional Briefings

Compared to formal presentations, informal meetings are less heavily planned and regulated. The main purpose of informal meetings is to discuss matters (e.g. issues or announcements) that do not really have a place for discussion in formal meetings. This type of presentation method is more spontaneous and flexible than most.

Different types of informal meetings include:

- **One-on-one Meeting**

  This type of meeting occurs between two people. For instance, colleagues may discuss ideas and share insights, or a manager may check on their employee to check on how they are doing or discuss any troubles they may be having.

- **Informal Team Meeting**

  This meeting usually occurs when teams come together to realign and discuss and problems they may be experiencing. It is a common occurrence that such meetings are called when an issue arises during the course of an undertaking.

- **Informational Meeting**

  This occurs when people come together to receive or share information or receive instructions such as announcements and news about the company (e.g. changes in organisational processes).

- **Instructional Briefing**

  This occurs when people come together to receive instructions and guidance about an undertaking. A common example of an instructional briefing is the project briefing, which outlines the objectives and goals of the project and ensures that everyone understands these. During a project briefing, the scope, and key details, as well as the projected timelines, are discussed. Steps in conducting a project briefing include:

<div style="text-align:center">

Outline the objective of the briefing

↓

Listen to feedback from the team regarding past projects and new objectives

↓

Ensure all members are involved and contribute to the discussion

</div>
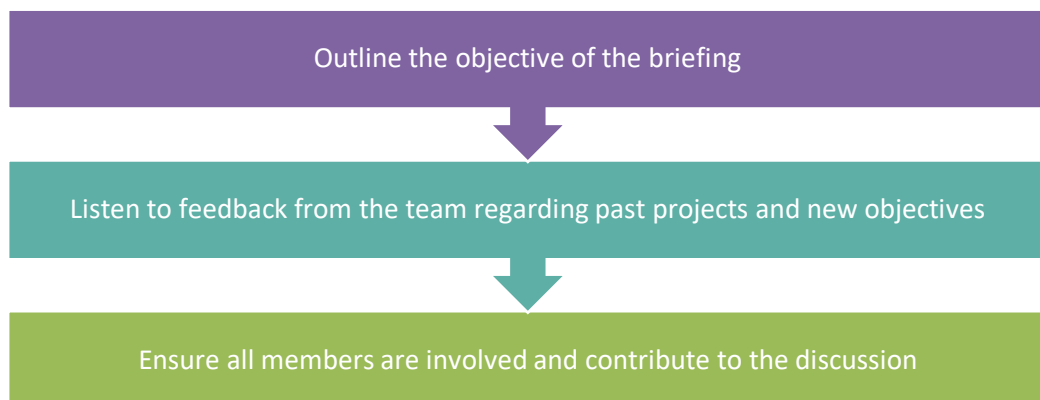
2.1.4 Written Instructions

The third and final presentation method comes in the form of written work instructions. These instructions are made to explain relevant processes or procedures for employees. Unlike the other presentation methods which come in the oral or verbal form, instructions come in the written form. This makes it easier to refer to them later on as necessary.

Among the different instructions you may have, perhaps the most common is your standard operating procedures (SOPs). A standard operating procedure is a set of instructions that provides step-by-step guidelines for carrying out different tasks. These tasks are often complex and routine, and SOPs are designed to help employees fulfil these as efficiently as possible.

To ensure that the SOPs you write is effective, you must have a key understanding of the four key components of an SOP. These are:

- **Process Hierarchy**

    There is a hierarchy for the kinds of SOPs you formulate, and it is represented by this figure:
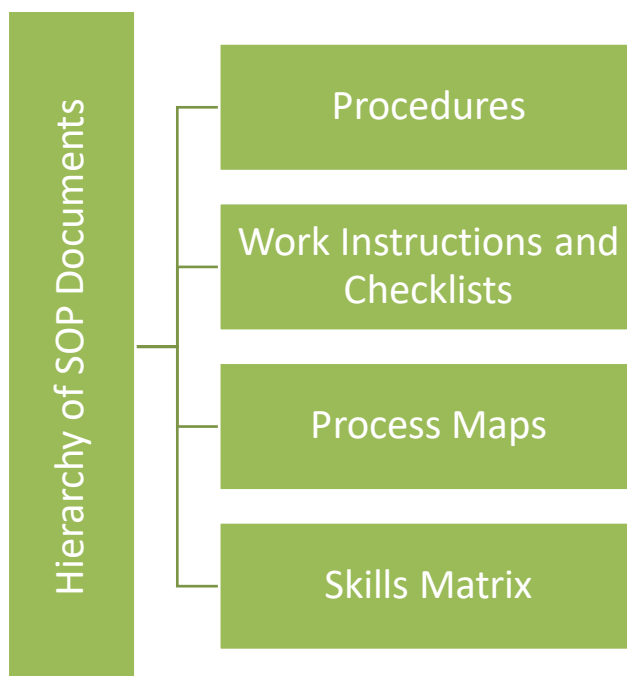
    Procedures describe the processes involved in your SOPs. This is further discussed below.

    Work instructions and checklists provide detailed guidance on how to perform procedures that are less frequently needed and/or critical.

    Process maps enable you to simplify complicated procedures. As the name would suggest, this is done by means of mapping the steps in your process.

    A skills matrix is a table or a grid that outlines the competencies required of different employees in order to complete a given process, task, or procedure.

▪ **Procedure**

Procedures supplement your policies. They enable you to enact the policies which set the tone for how things must be done in your organisation. Among the SOP documents, they are the least frequently updated and the most widely used.

▪ **Process**

Processes further detail the enactment of procedures, catering specifically to different tasks and different people in the organisation to guarantee alignment of all procedures. Your process will mark who is responsible for the different procedures in your organisation. Moreover, processes ensure that the tasks involved are accomplished properly and on time.

▪ **Instructions**

Instructions are your most basic SOP documents. These provide guidance for the enactment of basic work tasks.

To write clear instructions for your SOPs, you need to perform seven simple steps. These are:

Write a clear and concise title that encapsulates what your SOP is about.

Describe the purpose of your SOP.

Describe how you intend to complete the instruction.

Format the instructions in such a way that they can be easily read and understood.

Reread and simplify instructions as necessary.

Provide sources that will help employees enact the SOP.

Share your SOP with others and gather feedback from co-workers.

Additionally, you may also need to perform an eighth step, which is to consider the feedback given by co-workers and apply these to improve your SOPs.

2.2 Use Appropriate Method of Communication to Communicate Information or Instruction Based on the Requirements of Audience

Along with using appropriate presentation methods, you must also use the appropriate communication methods to communicate information or instructions. As it is with presentation methods, the determination of appropriate methods of communication will be done with consideration of the requirements of your audience.

2.2.1 Communication Methods Defined

Unlike presentation methods which are concerned about the ways you can provide information or instruction for your audience, communication methods are all about how you can engage in meaningful interactions with different audiences. Communication methods give your audiences a more active and participatory role in the interaction, and these are essentially the same as the different verbal and non-verbal methods discussed in Section 1.5.

Building from the previous discussion, there are a number of methods you can employ to communicate information and/or instructions. There are different considerations to be made for selecting a communication method, and a major concern is ensuring that your communication method aligns with the requirements of your audience. Communication methods worth considering include the following, arranged by order of the speed at which you can expect responses from your target audience:

- **Meetings**

    Meetings are an indispensable method of communicating within the workplace. There are different reasons meetings are held. Meetings may function to create forums, make decisions, or build or strengthen a team. For any type of meeting you may hold, the most important thing to remember is that you keep the needs of your audiences and keep them involved and aware. One way of ensuring this is through sufficiently planning before conducting a meeting. A key output of this stage is your agenda that outlines your plan for the meeting.

    It is important to have a clear and structured agenda to make meetings more efficient and timelier while sufficiently considering what is most appropriate for the intended audience. Having a good agenda will enable you to set the right tone and clarify what output is required from the meeting, provide clear topics to ensure that discussion points are all related, prevent the discussion of points that the meeting will not address, and help drive the discussion towards a clear and defined goal.

    It is important to ensure that you consider the needs of your audiences when deciding if a meeting is an ideal method of communicating with them. For instance, conducting a meeting is necessary when you need to conduct a training to explain in-depth a new process or change to team members and/or need to gain immediate and detailed insights from your intended audiences on certain matters. Communicating such information through any other means may not only be inefficient but would also make it difficult for your audience. You may not end up getting the responses you need.

- **Mobiles**

   This communication method is ideal for quickly reaching out to people you need to quickly and immediately speak to but are unable to interact with in person. This may be due to factors such as logistical concerns (e.g. you are not in the same location) and mismatch in schedules (e.g. although you are in the same vicinity, both of your unable to commit to a face-to-face meeting because you are both otherwise occupied with other commitments).

   Sometimes, the information or instructions you intend to communicate is a little too complex or lengthy to jot down. Moreover, it may be more effective to explain such matters verbally so that your audience would better understand you. When such happens, mobile is the most reliable method you can use to communicate.

   It is important that your use of mobiles is aligned with the requirements of your audiences. You must keep in mind that this communication method is one that may not be preferred or suitable for many. For one, it is almost impossible to have a phone call with someone with a speech impairment or someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.

- **Short message services (SMS)**

   Perhaps the quickest written method of communication, SMS is ideal for reaching out to both internal and external parties from whom you need immediate responses. Unlike the email which gives recipients two to three days to work on a given request, the nature of SMS allows you to demand a response from the receiver as soon as they get and read your message.

   The use of SMS is ideal for important and urgent matters that must quickly be addressed. For instance, if you are asking a co-worker working outside the office for a project update and you need the information immediately because you are currently coordinating with a client, you may opt to send them an SMS. This is especially true for instances where you have already sent an email but have yet to receive a reply.

   As with the other methods of communication, you must sufficiently consider the requirements of your intended audience in deciding if SMS is the appropriate communication method to use. There are audiences who would rather communicate through SMS than through calls. This could be because of special needs and/or personal preferences.

▪ **Emails**

This written method of communication is useful for reaching out to both internal and external parties quickly and efficiently. In situations that require sharing direct, detailed information, simple instructions, or providing a status update to one or more recipient, using this method is recommended. Moreover, information communicated via email should not be time-sensitive because, as a rule of thumb, responses via email will take time. The recipients of your emails may not read your emails immediately or at all. For instance, requests sent via email are usually accomplished within two to three days of being made – a response not as instant as the other communication methods.

Situations, where it is ideal to use this communication method, include notifying the team of updates to a process or a document, sending welcome messages to new employees, and submitting deliverables to a supervisor.

Once again, you must base your selection of this communication method on the requirements of your audience. Some audiences may be very responsive to emails, so it is easier and more sensible for you to communicate with them via email.

At the end of the day, you must always ensure that your selection and use of the communication methods discussed above is always suited to your audiences and sufficiently considers any requirements they may have.

2.2.2 Communication Styles

Analytical Communication Style	Intuitive Communication Style
Functional Communication Style	Personal Communication Style

The Four Communication Styles
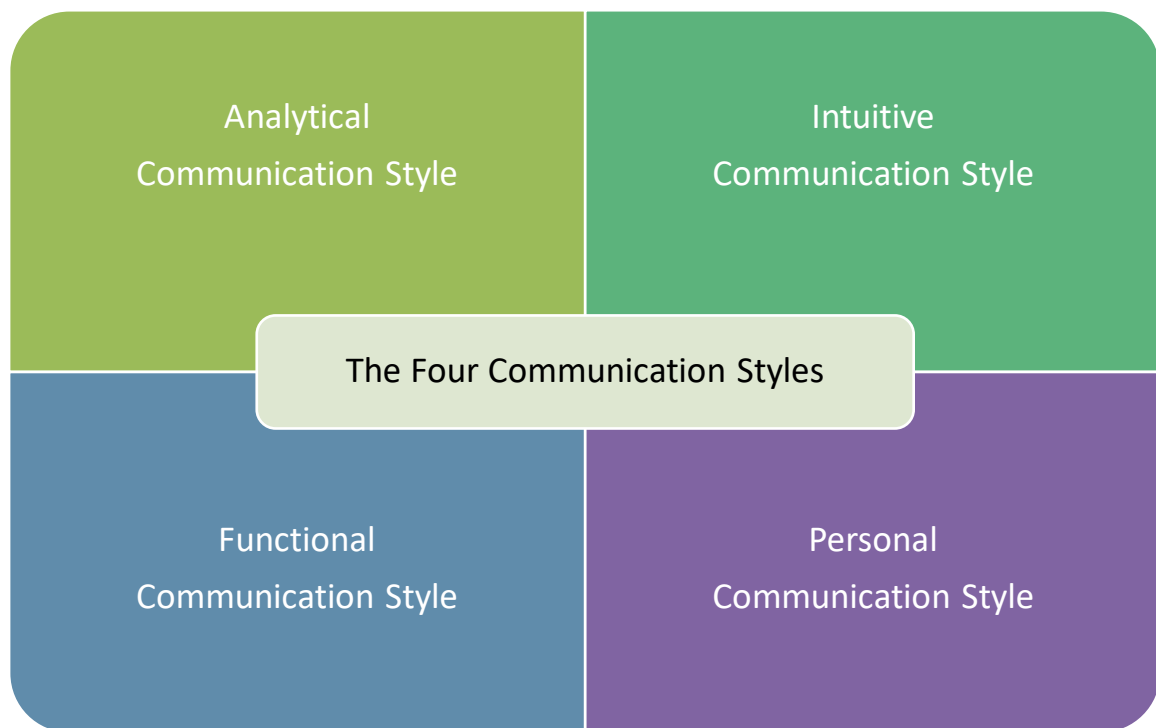
By definition, communication style is the way you interact and exchange information with others. There are different styles you can use, and you must be aware of the styles you and your audiences use so that you can adjust accordingly. In the context of the workplace, there are four different communication styles that merit discussion.

- **Analytical Communication Style**

   The analytical communication style is concerned with hard data and statistics and places heavy reliance on numbers and logic. This style values clarity and specificity; its users avoid vagueness and ambiguity. This is the reason that people who use this style may often be seen as cold or heartless.

   Using this style is ideal when you need to deal with high levels of data and information. When you are dealing with complex information or instructions that would be difficult to communicate without a factual basis and sound reasoning, it is best to use the analytical communication style. Moreover, if audiences are more concerned about data analyses and technical information, it is best and most appropriate to employ this style.

- **Intuitive Communication Style**

  This communication style is concerned with seeing and highlighting the bigger picture. Unlike the detail-oriented analytical communication style, the intuitive communication style focuses on the overview of an entire project or initiative, placing value on meeting the end goal or point. A person using this style is seen as innovative, open to exploring new ideas, and encouraging interaction and creative thinking from audiences. On the flip side, however, people using it are often deemed impatient as they do not make an effort to go over each specific detail involved in processes and projects. This means they may end up overlooking important points.

  Still, using the intuitive communication style is necessary when communicating with people who may not be too concerned about the nitty-gritty details of a project. This style compels people to see and appreciate the overall outcomes and bigger picture, making it easier to relate with people who simply want to understand the value of a given undertaking. This style is also quick and concise, so it is useful for situations where time for communicating is limited.

- **Functional Communication Style**

  This communication style is concerned with processes, details, and plans that underlie any initiative. Functional communicators are often relied on to implement and enact projects by virtue of their love for the process and the details. They can effectively evaluate the merit of initiatives and easily point out flaws and points for improvement. However, use of this style proves to be the most time-consuming due to the sheer amount of information the functional communicator has to discuss.

  Using this style is ideal when you need to provide clear step-by-step plans to complete tasks or achieve goals, explain processes to those who need to know the specific details of a certain initiative, and give clear and constant feedback so that employees are able to improve on their overall performance.

- **Personal Communication Style**

The fourth and final communication style is, as the name would suggest, the most personable one. The personal communication style is concerned about being able to connect with audiences on a deeper and more emotional level. People who use this style are considered relationship-oriented. They want to understand their audiences and have meaningful interactions. Personal communicators tend to be active and effective listeners as well as diplomats who help resolve conflict and issues and glue teams together. Likewise, they value and respond better to honest and direct feedback, communicating honest thoughts and feelings and expecting others to do the same.

The personal communication style is ideal to use when you speak in person. It is useful when discussing matters that are less concerned about work and more concerned about the employees (e.g. team building, conflict resolution). This style may also come in handy when you are trying to establish rapport with important people (e.g. potential customers, board members).

2.3 Negotiate Expected Work Requirements with Others and Clarify That Instructions Have Been Understood

The third and final step involved in using communication strategies to provide work instruction is negotiating the expected work requirements with others and clarifying that the instructions you have provided have been understood.

2.3.1 Expected Work Requirements

Expected work requirements are essentially the tasks and roles an employee must fulfil for any given undertaking. Of particular interest are your communication roles which, as mentioned in Section 1.3, refer to the part a person plays in a communication activity. These are important as your work activities will not be properly fulfilled if employees do not know what is expected of them and clarify what such expectation would entail. You must, therefore, ensure that employees are made aware of these requirements and are also given a chance to negotiate their roles, as necessary.

2.3.2 Negotiation Process

The process of clarifying and negotiating communication roles is relatively straightforward. The so-called negotiation that takes place is informal and does not have any strict requirements.

The general steps involved in this process include:

Preparation

Discussion

Clarifying Goals and Interests

Negotiating Towards a Win-Win Solution

Agreement

Implenting a Course of Action

1. **Preparation**

    As with any endeavour, you still need to sufficiently prepare for the negotiation beforehand. Given your role as the one who is trying to negotiate with an employee, you need to ensure that you are fully equipped with any resources you would need.

2. **Discussion**

    At this point, your negotiation process begins, and you talk about the matter at hand. In this case, you will articulate the role you would like the employee to fulfil and explain it in detail. Likewise, the employee will share their side and how they feel about the situation. It may be useful to note points of interest during this step so that you can sufficiently bring up and/or clarify these later on.

3. **Clarifying Goals and Interests**

    Once you have fully understood one another, you are ready to clarify the goals and interests you have; those you share and those you do not. It is useful to rank these in terms of priority to understand how you can adjust to one another and work towards the next step of the process. During this step, you will also clarify any points that are unclear. This is especially important for the employee who may seek clarification regarding the role that is being asked of them.

4. **Negotiating Towards a Win-Win Outcome**

Having taken note of the goals and interests of both parties, you can now negotiate towards a win-win outcome. Perhaps, the employee is fine with certain aspects of the communication role such as the work and tasks involved but has issues with matters such as schedule. These are things you must talk about.

5. **Agreement**

Once both parties understand each other and agree to compromise and adjust to each other as necessary, you can now come to an agreement. Once again, you must make sure that you and the employee are on the same page. Clarify that they understand the instructions being given to them for their roles and the subsequent expectations asked of them. This will guarantee that they can fulfil the role satisfactorily moving forward.

6. **Implementing a Course of Action**

Finally, you can move on to the implementation of a course of action that will carry out the agreement made. In this case, this is the employee's enactment of their role and the subsequent tasks they need to fulfil.

Activity 2

Using the given clues and the discussion in this chapter, complete the crossword puzzle.
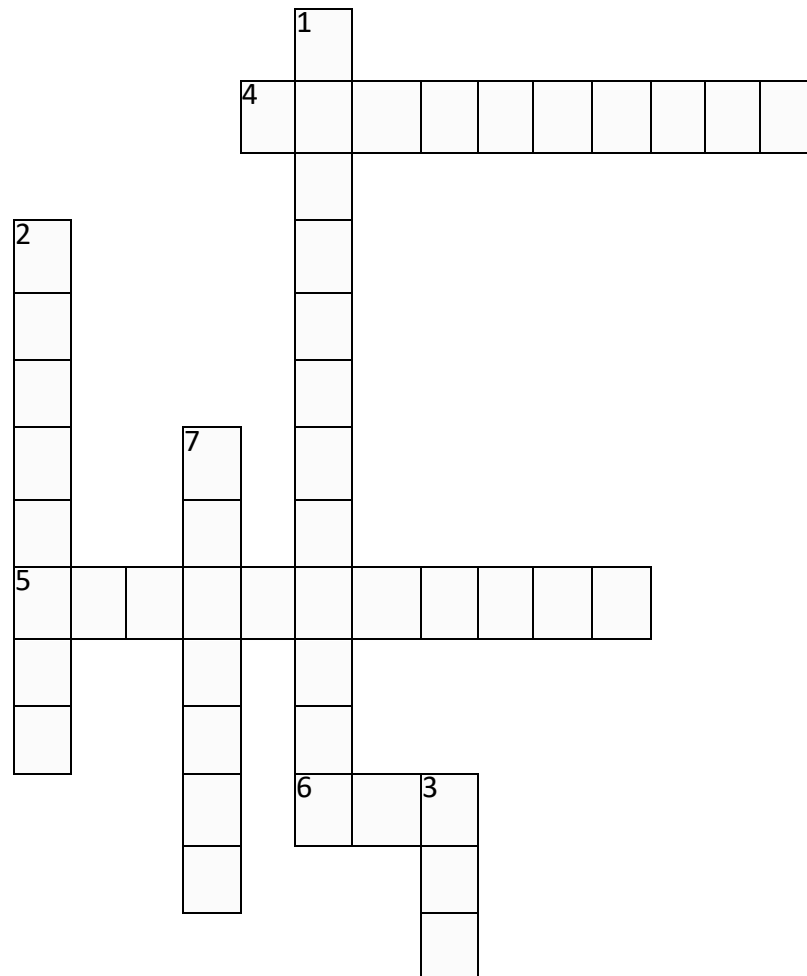
1. The most basic SOP that provides guidance for basic work tasks

2. The communication style that is relationship-oriented

3. Instructions that provide step-by-step guidelines for carrying out different tasks

4. The communication style that relies on numbers and logic

5. Has a relatively informal version that occurs to clarify communication roles

6. The quickest written method of communication

7. An SOP document that further details the enactment of your procedures

Notes

Key Points: Chapter 2

- To ensure that you use the appropriate presentation and communication methods, you must consider the requirements of your intended audience.

- There are different presentation and communication methods – both verbal and written – that you can use to communicate information and instructions.

- The methods available can be used for both internal and external stakeholders.

- It is important to align your selection of communication method with the communication style you and your audience use.

- You must successfully negotiate the expected work requirements with others to ensure that they clearly understand the roles, tasks, and instructions given to them.

Chapter 2 – 'True' or 'False' Quiz

Tick 'True' if the statement is correct, and 'False' if not.	True	False
Formal presentations can be done in person as well as online.	☐	☐
A standard operating procedure is a set of instructions that provides step-by-step guidelines for carrying out different tasks.	☐	☐
Generally speaking, requests sent via email must be accomplished as soon as they have been made.	☐	☐
The functional communication style is concerned with seeing and highlighting the bigger picture.	☐	☐
Expected work requirements are essentially the tasks and roles an employee must fulfil for any given undertaking.	☐	☐
The process of clarifying and negotiating communication roles is relatively straightforward and informal.	☐	☐

Chapter 3: Facilitate Workplace Communication

Now that you have established the communication requirements of your identified work activities, you can work on your next order of business. The third stage in your process involves facilitating workplace communication; it is at this point where you execute plans for applying communication strategies in the workplace.

As with the two preceding stages, there are sub-steps involved in facilitating workplace communication. First, you begin by using interpersonal skills to build relationships with team members and clients alike. As you do, you must also facilitate respectful interaction. Likewise, you must then facilitate respectful communication amongst others, considering the needs of those from diverse backgrounds.

Along with these two steps, you must also use problem solving and decision making skills to resolve any communication challenges that you may encounter along the way. Finally, you must obtain confirmation on the outcomes of communication challenges to ensure issues have been resolved.

3.1 Use Interpersonal Skills to Build Relationships with Team Members and Clients and Facilitate Respectful Interaction

The first order of business involved in facilitating workplace communication is using interpersonal skills to build relationships with team members and clients alike. In doing so, you must also facilitate respectful interaction with those you communicate with.

3.1.1 Interpersonal Skills Defined

By definition, interpersonal skills are the traits you need to interact with others. There are many interpersonal skills that will help you better interact with others, but those most relevant in the workplace are further discussed below.

Having and developing such skills is especially important as you need to build meaningful relationships with both fellow employees and clients alike. Being able to do so would help you work on your endeavours better, and this is especially important for the organisation's long-term growth.

It is equally important that you use interpersonal skills to facilitate respectful interactions with others. The workplace should be accepting and being equipped with interpersonal skills will enable you to make your organisation more welcoming to all.

3.1.2 Using Interpersonal Skills for Effective Participation

As a general rule, interpersonal skills should be used in every workplace interaction you have. One particular kind of interaction, however, is highlighted as it is a fundamental workplace activity. This activity is your workplace discussions, which are the exchanges you have regarding business matters. It is important that you display interpersonal skills when you engage in workplace discussions, as doing so will enable you to effectively participate in this activity.

Guidance in using interpersonal skills for effective participation in workplace discussions includes:

- **Engage in active listening**

  Active listening means giving your full attention to whoever is speaking. This is an interpersonal skill that shows how much you respect and care about what the other person is saying. The most fundamental way through which you can engage in active listening is through being attentive instead of passive. Along with this, useful techniques in demonstrating active listening include:

  - Using and maintaining eye contact with the speaker

  - Leaning towards the speaker to show interest

  - Nodding your head when you agree with points being made

  - Summarising or paraphrasing messages

  - Seeking confirmation that your understanding of the speaker's points is correct

- **Practise active questioning**

  Along with active listening, active questioning is a skill that will show you are engaged in the discussion being held. Active questioning entails asking meaningful questions that would deepen the conversation you are having, eliciting and encouraging critical thinking. This skill will help improve the discussion and keep it going. Useful techniques in demonstrating active questioning include:

  - Asking probing questions

  - Using funnel questioning (asking general questions first, then moving to more specific questions as you go along)

  - Seeking answers to open-ended questions to encourage a free flow of thoughts

■ **Provide feedback**

The third and final skill you need to develop is the ability to provide effective feedback. For senders and receivers of messages, feedback is an important way to keep yourself in check. Sometimes, you may think that you are able to communicate effectively when you are already being misunderstood. To lessen such instances and also make sure that you and those you communicate with are on the same page, you must learn to provide effective feedback during discussions. Guidance in doing so includes:

- o Concentrate on behaviour displayed rather than personality
- o Note both good and both points
- o Provide feedback during an appropriate time in the discussion
- o Share feedback with a respectful and well-meaning tone
- o Specify areas that require attention or improvement

3.1.3 Using Interpersonal Skills for Relationship Building

Along with the skills listed above, there are a number of interpersonal skills that will help you build meaningful relationships with team members and clients alike. In using these, you will recognise the value of being respectful as you interact with others. This is something that will enable you to interact more effectively.

Guidance in using interpersonal skills for relationship building includes:

- **Show empathy**

  Empathy means the ability to understand how others feel and to put yourself in their shoes. This is an important interpersonal skill that will enable you to relate with others and establish meaningful relationships with them.

  It is important to show empathy to your teammates, as this makes them feel valued. Your attempts to understand them and check on their feelings will help them recognise how they are valued not only for the work that they do but also on a more personal level. You can show empathy by taking the time to check on them during meetings as well as spending time with them outside of work hours to get to know them better.

  For clients, showing empathy can be done by making an effort to ask them about their concerns and trying to understand where they are coming from. As with your team, you can also check on them and learn about them on a more personal level as long as you remember your boundaries. If done well, you will be able to build long-lasting relationships.

- **Resolve conflict**

  The ability to resolve conflict well is a skill that needs to be learned and practised. If you can handle conflict effectively, you will be able to build sturdy relationships with both teammates and clients.

  Conflict is not something that you can ever truly avoid, so it is important that you know how to properly resolve it. Maintain respect as you do so, and always remember that the people who are in conflict all have their own feelings and stands. Consider these and ensure that you remain fair. Further guidance on this is found in Section 3.3.

- **Be open and adaptable**

  Openness and adaptability are perhaps among the most valuable interpersonal skills that will enable you to build meaningful relationships with others. These skills work hand in hand. By keeping an open mind, you allow yourself to consider the thoughts and opinions of others. Likewise, being adaptable means having the willingness to adjust to the people you are with and the situations you find yourself in.

  You can demonstrate these skills by trying to eliminate any biases you have as you interact with teammates and clients alike – something especially important to do when with others who have different cultural backgrounds. By being open and adaptable, you are also able to display respect to those you are with. In the long run, these skills will enable you to build healthy relationships.

3.2 Facilitate Respectful Communication Amongst Others, Considering the Needs of Those from Diverse Backgrounds

The next order of business in facilitating workplace communication further highlights the importance of respect in communication. It is vital that your organisation is genuinely welcoming to employees and also clients of different backgrounds. The way you communicate in the workplace will show how well you welcome people from different backgrounds, so it is crucial that you promote and facilitate respectful communication at all times, giving special consideration for the needs of those who come from diverse backgrounds.

3.2.1 Cross-Cultural Communication

Diversity in people's cultural backgrounds is a result of the key differences in race, gender, sex, religion, age, among others. Of particular interest are differences in terms of race or nationality. When people from different cultures interact and attempt to share or exchange information with each other, cross-cultural communication takes place. Understanding the principles and techniques associated with this concept will help you facilitate respectful communication effectively.

Principles of Cross-Cultural Communication

The principles that underlie cross-cultural communication highlight the fundamental differences among cultures. These significantly impact how a person communicates, so awareness of these will help you communicate more effectively and respectfully. Three particular principles of cross-cultural communication merit discussion. These are:

- **High and Low Context Cultures**

High-context culture
- Indirect communication
- Non-verbal language

Low-context culture
- Direct communication
- Verbal language
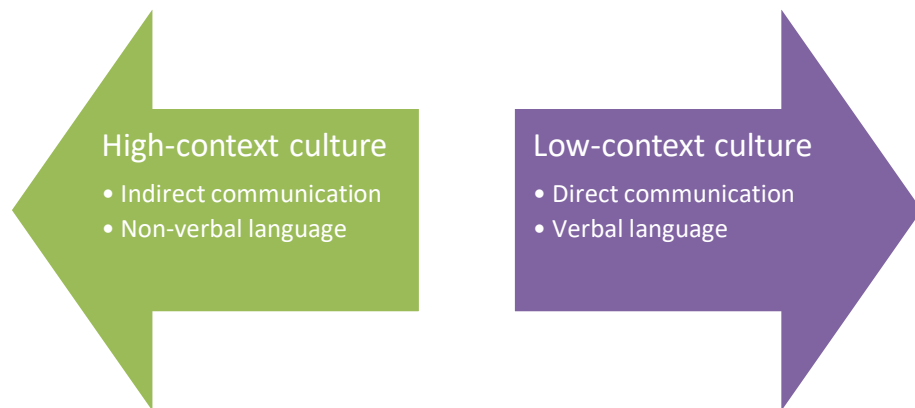
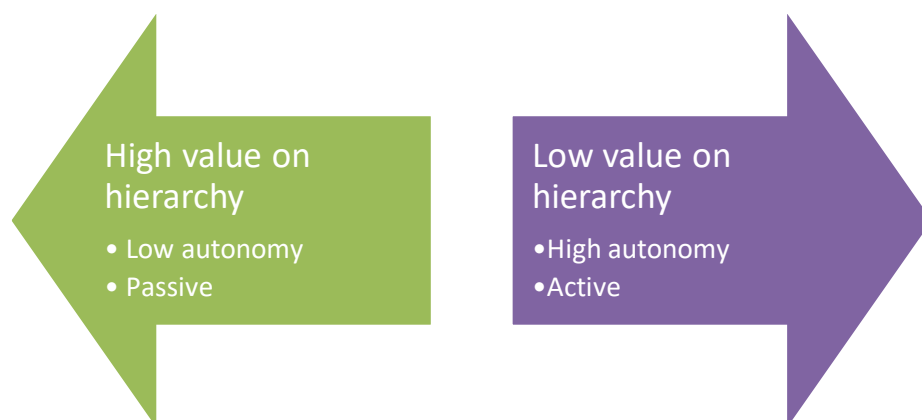This principle looks into how different cultures would have varying needs for context when they communicate. High-context cultures are collectivist, so they place a high value in interpersonal relationships. This is why communication in high-context cultures relies heavily on background information that helps contextualise conversations. These cultures value indirect communication and are heavily reliant on non-verbal elements of communication (i.e. tone, gestures, and facial expressions). Most Asian countries are considered to be high-context cultures.

On the other hand, low-context cultures are individualistic, and so their communication style is more independent of context. These cultures value directness in communication. They are explicit and upfront, relying heavily on verbal cues (i.e. language). Australia and western countries are considered to be high-context cultures.

Understanding the elements that high and low cultures value will help in understanding the suitable way to communicate with others. This will tell you if it will be effective to use direct verbal language or body cues to get your point across.

- **Impact of Hierarchy**

This principle looks into hierarchy, specifically in terms of how it is defined or understood and how it ultimately influences communication. As with context, different cultures' perspective on hierarchy is seen along a scale.

Cultures that place a high value on hierarchy have low autonomy and high passivity. These cultures are heavily reliant on structure and likewise compliant to authority figures. Most, if not all, high-context cultures are also hierarchical. An example of such a culture is China. People from hierarchical cultures are more passive and submissive to authority; they are more likely to accept rules and status quos.

On the other hand, cultures that place a low value on hierarchy have high autonomy and are very active. Such cultures value independence and self-reliance, so they are very confident and dominant in their communication style. They would likely be vocal and assert their individual concerns more openly. Low-context cultures such as the USA often place low value on hierarchy.

This principle considers the influence of hierarchy and its definition among different sets of cultures. This assists in understanding how to properly interact with someone in the workplace. Learning the value of hierarchy on culture will assist in identifying how to best express gratitude or respect to your peers depending on their culture and the hierarchy they use when communicating.

■ **Openness**

Low level of openness
• Listens more than they speak
• More critical of others' views

High level of openness
• Speaks just as much or even more than they listen
• More willing to accept others' views

The third principle concerns one's willingness to be open when communicating. Such manifests in the way they provide as well as receive information throughout an exchange. As with context and hierarchy, openness among different cultures is seen along a scale.

Cultures that exhibit a low level of openness tend to be more closed off. They are usually more active listeners than speakers, less willing to share and speak up. Those from high-context and hierarchical cultures often display a low level of openness when they communicate.

On the other hand, people with a high level of openness are assertive and proactive. They speak just as much or even more than they listen. Likewise, they are more willing to accept what others have to say. This does not necessarily mean that they automatically agree; it simply means they are more open to the fact that others may have views that oppose their own.

The principle of openness will help you set better expectations in your communication efforts. This will enable you to determine how to adjust to the person you are communicating with. More specifically, acknowledging this will help you decide on how you will engage with the other party (i.e. Will you encourage them to speak more?).

Techniques for Cross-Cultural Communication

With these principles in mind, there are useful techniques that would help you communicate cross-culturally. These include:

- **Develop cultural awareness**

  It is essential that you develop cultural awareness before you even communication cross-culturally. This means having an open mind and remembering that the conventions you have been accustomed to are not the only ones that exist. Prejudices, stereotypes, and assumptions regarding different cultures should likewise be disregarded. Along with having the right mindset, it is also important to have sufficient knowledge regarding the culture of those you will communicate with. To aid you, you may undergo cross-cultural training and/or take time to research on different cultures.

- **Practise active listening**

  As mentioned in Section 3.1, active listening enhances communication. There are many differences in the communicative behaviours of parties who engage in cross-cultural communication, so the importance of active listening is further reinforced in this context. It is crucial to pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal cues while you communicate. Avoid dominating the conversation and allow fair turn-taking. Use verbal cues to indicate that you are actively listening to the person speaking and ask questions or clarifications on what is being discussed. Likewise, use nonverbal cues like leaning in and nodding to indicate that you are interested in and paying attention to the speaker.

- **Be careful with your use of language**

  The way you use language can make or break your cross-cultural communication act. Remember that words hold two different kinds of meaning, the denotation (i.e. the literal or dictionary definition) and the connotation (i.e. meanings associated with the word based on personal and cultural context). To avoid misunderstanding, use simple words and avoid language that is vague or ambiguous. It is also best to avoid slang and use humour with caution as these may be interpreted differently.

- **Observe non-verbal elements**

  The non-verbal aspect of your communication is just as important as the verbal one. Regardless of the need for context, it is important to be cautious about how you say what you choose to say. Along with the nonverbal cues that demonstrate active listening, use the right tone and voice while speaking. Moreover, speak slowly and clearly. This generally indicates sincerity and respect. You can also maintain eye contact and use gestures with caution, as certain non-verbal cues may bear different meanings across cultures.

3.2.2 Communication with Individuals with Special Needs

In your efforts to facilitate respectful communication with people from diverse backgrounds, you must practise sensitivity when communicating with individuals with special needs. These individuals represent cultural minorities in Australia.

Communicating with the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders

When communicating with Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, there are a number of considerations you must bear in mind. These include:

- Use formal addresses when interacting with elders. Keep in mind that Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders have certain customs and respect for elders.

- Use clear language. Minimise jargon and technical terms and be sure to explain them well when used. Consider the fact that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may have lower literacy and numeracy skills.

- Be aware of words that may hold different meanings in different communities as well as the gender-specific elements you need to consider for cultural reasons. This is to ensure that you avoid offending them.

- Provide information actively as some Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders are more likely to wait for such to be presented than seek it out themselves.

- Keep in mind that they may not have English as their first language; it is advisable to have a translator to help you.

- Be aware of the fact that most indigenous languages are verbal in nature; this means they cannot be translated into a written form.

Communicating with the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

Along with Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, you must also be aware of the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). These are the people in the country whose first language is not English, and this section provides practical guidance in communicating with and about them. Guidance in communicating with them includes:

- Greet and address the CALD people you speak with politely, pronouncing their names properly. Failure to do so may come across as offensive.

- Speak clearly and enunciate your words properly.

- Use simple words but do not oversimplify your speech as it may come across as rude.

- Avoid the use of slang and filler words as well as jargon and acronyms.

- Present information in small chunks. This will help avoid confusion as you communicate.

- Provide examples and stories that can illustrate and clarify your points.

- Stay relaxed and open as you communicate. Raising your voice does not increase understanding, and it may be misconstrued.

- Do not pretend to understand what they are saying. Acknowledge that there is a language barrier, but do not make it an issue.

- Repeat what you understand and likewise seek confirmation from them as you communicate to ensure that you are on the same page.

- Be attentive and respectful at all times.

3.2.3 Communication with Individuals with Disabilities

When communicating with individuals who have disabilities, you must make an effort to know the proper ways of doing so. There are a lot of misconceptions in this regard, and you must be aware that what you deem acceptable might actually be wrong.

General Considerations

When communicating with individuals who have disabilities, you must remember to:

- **Treat them as you would treat others**

    It is easy to forget that persons with disabilities are just like anyone else. To make them feel included and accepted instead of isolated and differentiated, you must keep this in mind. This means that you should treat them with the same level of respect that you would treat everyone else.

- **Speak directly to them**

    One common mistake people tend to do is talking about people with disabilities and avoiding talking to them directly. This is disrespectful and should be avoided. Assume that they are fully equipped to understand you and communicate with them directly. This is especially important to remember when you are communicating with those who have accompanying persons. The accompanying person is there to aid the person with a disability in understanding what you are trying to say, but they should not be treated as messengers.

- **Use appropriate language**

    It is important to use respectful language as you speak to people with disabilities. Avoid offensive and vague or ambiguous words that they may misinterpret. Specific terms you must avoid include those that are considered fundamentally patronising and offensive (e.g. retarded or disabled). Instead of using these, make use of acceptable and politically correct terms (e.g. mentally challenged, differently-abled).

- **Observe and use non-verbal signals**

    Just as it is with other communication activities, the non-verbal elements of an exchange make up a huge part of your message. Pay attention to how body language displayed by the person you are communicating with to ensure that you are on the same page. If something is unclear to you, do not be afraid to ask them about it. Likewise, use non-verbal signals appropriately. Be mindful of your use of gestures and way of saying things.

- **Be patient**

    One important tip that is fundamental in your communication with persons who have disabilities is to remain patient throughout your exchange. Patience is something that will help you better communicate with persons with special needs. This is because it may take a little bit more time to try to understand what they are saying and to have them understand what you are trying to say.

Communicating with the Visually Impaired

When communicating with individuals who have visual impairments, you must be as direct as possible. The importance of using the right tone, speed, and volume in speaking is also reinforced as oral communication is the main way through which you will be understood. Specific guidelines include:

- Identify yourself as you speak; do not assume that the visually impaired person you are speaking to will automatically recognise you through your voice.

- Keep your speech relaxed, clear, and natural, making use of regular everyday language.

- Do not avoid talking about topics that relate to sight. This will keep your conversation natural and normal and make the person you are communicating with feel like an equal.

- Use specific language when giving directions; do not just say that something is 'over there,' and instead say exactly where it is (e.g. 'on your left').

- Use body language as you speak; it will affect the tone of your voice and aid the visually impaired person in understanding you.

- When communicating in a group:
    o Directly address the visually impaired person before speaking to them
    o Introduce everyone who is in the group.

- Do not leave a conversation without saying so.

Communicating with the Hard of Hearing

When communicating individuals who have hearing loss or hearing problems, you must first ensure that the place where you communicate accommodates their needs. A quiet and well-lit room is ideal for such an exchange. It is also advisable that you have a pen and paper or a handheld device on hand so you can write down anything that is not understood through verbal communication. An additional skill, sign language, may also be necessary for you to learn so you can better communicate with them.

Specific guidelines include:

- Start by identifying the topic or matters to be discussed.

- Speak at a normal but considerate pace as speaking too slow may be considered condescending.

- Ask the person you are speaking with if they would like you to adjust your speaking speed so they can better understand you.

- Speak a little louder than usual but do not shout. This will help you enunciate words more clearly.

- Speak clearly but do not overexaggerate your lip and mouth movements; contrary to popular belief, this makes speech-reading more difficult.

- Maximise the use of non-verbal cues (i.e. body language and facial expressions) as this would help the person who is hard of hearing understand you better.

- Remember to pause from time to time so that the person you are speaking with can catch up and ask questions.

Activity 3

Using the discussion in Section 3.2, assess the guidance in communicating respectfully outlined below. Add a star in the corresponding circles if these are acceptable and leave them blank if they are not.

Overexaggerate your lip and mouth movements when communicate with the hard of hearing. This will help them speech-read better.

Use formal addresses when interacting with elders. Keep in mind that Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders have certain customs and respect for elders.

To communicate with persons with disabilities more effectively, directly address their accompanying persons instead of them.

Identify yourself as you speak; do not assume that the visually impaired person you are speaking to will automatically recognise you through your voice.

Have a pen and paper or a handheld device on hand so you can write down anything that is not understood through verbal communication.

Greet and address the CALD people you speak with politely, pronouncing their names properly.

When communicating with the visually impaired, avoid talking about topics that relate to sight.

3.3 Use Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills to Resolve Any Communication Challenges

Another key step you must undergo in the process of facilitating communication in the workplace involves using problem solving and decision making skills to resolve communication challenges you may face along the way.

The communication challenges you may come across concern about the various problems that you would encounter in the workplace. These are matters that you will be able to resolve by means of effective communication. More specifically, addressing these issues will require you to use problem solving and decision making skills.

3.3.1 Conflict Resolution

The first communication challenge you would experience in the workplace involves conflict. Conflict refers to an argument, dispute, or clash between or among parties. Such is further characterised by a higher level of seriousness or gravity than most disagreements and cannot be fully avoided in the workplace. To resolve these, you must undergo conflict resolution. This is the process through which parties who are in dispute reach a resolution. There are different types of conflict, and those of particular concern are team conflict and client conflict.

Team Conflict

As the name would suggest, team conflict refers to disagreements that occur within work teams. The most common types of team conflicts and the subsequent techniques to address them are discussed below.

▪ **Leadership conflict**

This conflict arises when the team leader's style does not match with the needs and/or personalities of team members. The fact is that different leaders lead differently, and team members would have personal preferences as to the kind of leader they want or the kind of leadership style that would work for them.

> **Conflict Resolution Technique**
>
> • You must be aware of your leadership style as well as the differences in the preferred styles of your members. Likewise, you must accept these and make the necessary adjustments to your style so that you can acommodate the different needs of your members.

- **Relationship conflict**

Perhaps the most common type of team conflict, relationship conflict is a result of differences in personality, style, and taste. It is known for a fact that you will not get along with every person you meet, but this type of conflict is especially taxing due to the context where it occurs. When relationship conflicts occur within work teams, it can ultimately ruin the flow and dynamic of the team. This would make it difficult or even impossible for the team to achieve the goals it is set out to do.

> **Conflict Resolution Technique**
>
> - As much as possible, it is best if those who are directly involved in the relationship conflict would sort things out among themselves. Find common ground and try to establish shared experiences and interests that could salvage your relationsip. Should the conflict persist or worsen after such attempts, it is advised that a manager step in and help sort things out.

- **Task conflict**

Task conflicts directly concern the work that is assigned to employees. These can come up from disputes related to dividing up resources, differing opinions regarding protocols and interpretation of facts. Among the different conflict types, this may seem like it is the most straightforward and easiest to resolve. However, task conflict usually has deeper roots and more complex than you would expect. This is especially true when other issues may have already compounded, and task conflict is simply the final straw in a long-brewing tension.

> **Conflict Resolution Technique**
>
> - It is advised that this type of conflict is resolved by means of seeking the help of managers or supervisors who can help mediate and keep everyone on track.

- **Value conflict**

This type of conflict is a result of differences in each individual's core values, such as those associated with politics, religion, ethics, etc. Value conflict can arise in the context of work decisions and policies that would require members to make use of their values. Such conflicts can potentially increase sentiments of distrust and alienation among team members if left unresolved.

> **Conflict Resolution Technique**
>
> - Instead of aiming for a resolution, this type of conflict seeks mutual understanding and respect between and among employees who share different values. This is because the nature of values makes it quite impossible for parties to truly adjust with each other. Instead of forcing beliefs on one another, employees must simply accept that they have different values. Moreover, universal values shared among employees should be highlighted so as to establish common ground despite the inherent differences.

- **Work style conflict**

As it is with leadership styles, there are also differences in work styles of team members. Each person in your team would have preferences on how they accomplish tasks. Members may have different methodologies and priorities when it comes to working, and this may lead to clashes among members that would lead to other types of conflict, such as task conflict (if, for instance, the difference in working style would greatly impact how a task is accomplished).

> **Conflict Resolution Technique**
>
> - Much like resolving leadership conflict, work style conflict can be resolved by recognising the differences in each member's style. Work with and around these by finding ways in which you can collaborate and accommodate each other as you work towards shared goals.

Client Conflict

Client conflict is something you cannot completely avoid. In the context of this discussion, the conflicts of concern are communication challenges that you may encounter when dealing with clients. The most common of these include:

- **Conflict due to motive**

    This conflict is a result of a difference in the reasons that underlie your decisions. Most of the time, the motives that underlie your chosen actions are hidden; likewise, it is common to assume that the other party shares the same motives that you do. However, the truth is that you and your client may have different rationales for making the same choices that would concern and affect you both.

    Conflict Resolution Technique

    - You and your client must willingly open up about your motives. Although you will likely find that you do not have the same motives, this will help you know where you stand and adjust to one another accordingly.

- **Conflict due to poor management of expectations**

    Perhaps the most common source of client conflict is poor management of expectations. Too often, it is tempting to promise that you can deliver the requests and cater to the wants of your clients. However, the desire to please a client may blind you from considering your actual capacity to deliver what they seek. As a result, failure to manage expectations may harm your reputation and lessen the likelihood of getting additional referrals.

    Conflict Resolution Technique

    - Tempting as it may be to promise that you can satisfy a client's every request, remember that it is always better to under-promise and overdeliver.

- **Conflict due to priorities**

    Sometimes, your priorities and that of the client are not aligned with one another. While you may be focused on trying to accomplish more urgent and pressing tasks, your client may be more concerned about the projects and the outputs they are expecting from you. This causes conflict because you and your client are progressing with different outcomes in mind.

    Conflict Resolution Technique

    - This is a classic example of client conflict that may be resolved through proper communication and realignment.

Techniques in Resolving Face-to-Face Client Conflict

Along with the above-mentioned techniques, there are useful techniques you can use in resolving client conflict that occurs in face-to-face settings. These include:

- **Use the right verbal cues**

  Be mindful of the language you use as you try to resolve client conflict. The situation already has negative connotations and possible tensions among those involved and saying the wrong words may lead to heightened conflict and misunderstanding. Phrase your statements carefully, using words that are more neutral and less aggressive. It is also best to stick to facts and avoid focusing on opinions that may further aggravate the situation.

- **Use the right non-verbal cues and body language**

  Using non-verbal cues appropriately will help you resolve client conflict more easily. Avoid raising your voice or speaking aggressively; stay calm and collected at all times. To further encourage clients to be open with you, maintain an open stance and use positive body language such as leaning in, nodding your head in agreement. This would increase their willingness to sit down and talk about the problem at hand rather than being angry about it.

- **Listen and allow everyone to speak**

  Actively listen to your client to avoid further miscommunication. In doing so, it may be helpful to use signals that indicate your understanding of what they are saying. You may also restate and summarise points they have said and confirm if that is what they meant to say.

  Likewise, it is important to give the client their fair share of time to express themselves. Avoid talking over them and allow them to explain their concerns. As they do, continue to actively listen and be open to what they have to say.

- **Come up with solutions**

  Do not just passively accept your client's concerns; respond accordingly. This means showing empathy and apologising when necessary and trying to offer solutions to address the complaints. At the end of the day, conflict resolution aims to solve the problems raised by your clients. It is imperative that you come up with concrete options that may help address their concerns. Even though you are not fully capable of resolving the issues they have raised, you must still provide them with options and guidance on how these can be addressed.

3.3.2 Risk and Hazard Communication

Communicating potential risks or safety hazards may not be the most pleasant of tasks. However, it is imperative that you handle these matters well and manage them effectively.

Challenges in Risk and Hazard Communication

Like any other engagement, there may be challenges you will face in risk and hazard communication. These would include:

- **Phenomenology of risk**

    This refers to the knowledge that is known and made accessible to employees. Information on what the risk is, what can cause this, and what can happen is important. Such would enable stakeholders to determine the appropriate response for the risks and hazards they must prepare for. Not being able to provide sufficient information can lead to misinformed decisions, which lead to people underestimating or overestimating the risk. This leads to inappropriate safety measures that can greatly affect the business.

    > **Technique to Resolve This Challenge**
    >
    > - Ensure that you provide more than enough details that will enable employees to understand the risk and its potential impact. Moreover, make it a point to make sure that the information you provide is accurate and reliable. Remember that it is better to give too much information than too little.

- **Quantification of risk**

    When you communicate risks and hazards, you will need to discuss different numbers that give employees an idea of the actual impact and severity involved for each one. As with providing the right information, using the correct type of numbers used to describe risks is important. The interpretation of your figures is greatly affected depending on the target audience. For instance, terms such as 1 out of 5 instead of 20% can elicit different reactions from people.

    > **Technique to Resolve This Challenge**
    >
    > - When expressing your risks in numbers, remember to be mindful. You may need to change how you share figures and statistics based on the people you are communicating with.

▪ **Emotional response of audience**

Given the nature of the information you are trying to communicate, you can expect that there are heightened emotions surrounding the matter. It is important to consider how people will react to certain situations, no matter how low the occurrence. If you are dealing with 'high risk' situations such as natural calamities or dangerous substances, the 'gut' reaction of most people is fear or dread. This can greatly affect how they assess the situation and may lead to overestimations.

> **Technique to Resolve This Challenge**
>
> • The emotional response of your audience is not something you can control. However, it is something you can prepare for. When communicating risks, it is important to assess the possible reactions beforehand. Using this assessment, you can then plan to communicate and frame your messages appropriately.

Resolving Work Health and Safety Risks

Along with the challenges and techniques discussed above, there are communication techniques you can use to resolve the work health and safety risks you may encounter in the workplace. These techniques must be in line with the processes included in the work health and safety risk management process, which includes:

▪ **Risk analysis**

This is the identification and analysis of potential issues that can occur in the workplace and negatively impact employees, projects as well as the workplace itself.

▪ **Identification of control measures**

This is the determination of the different initiatives and/or protocols that can prevent and/or eliminate a risk or hazard you face in the workplace.

▪ **Identification of persons responsible for risks**

This is the determination of the key personnel whose job is to ensure that risks are properly addressed and resolved.

In line with this process, communication techniques for resolving work health and safety risks include:

- **Work Health and Safety consultation**

  As outlined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, consultation with workers regarding work health and safety matters is required for all organisations. Moreover, it is an effective way to manage potential risks or safety hazards. In consulting with workers who may be affected by the risks, you empower workers to communicate their concerns and suggestions in resolving these risks. This is efficient because workers who are in direct contact with and/or are affected by risks will be able to provide practical advice and opinions based on their experience. Such would help in creating more effective control measures.

- **Hazard report forms**

  It is imperative that your organisation provides employees with a formal means of recording and reporting hazards they may encounter in the workplace. This comes in the form of hazard report forms to be filled up once a hazard has been identified.

- **Coordination mechanisms**

  It is important to coordinate the procedures you have agreed upon for eliminating and minimising risks. This will help ensure that everyone who is concerned and/or involved can perform their duties effectively. In coordinating with relevant personnel, you must:

  - Sufficiently explain the reasons and steps involved in managing the risks

  - Clarify the duties assigned for each personnel and make sure that everyone is aware of the tasks involved with these duties

  - Ensure that personnel are fully equipped with the necessary skills and materials that would enable them to perform their duties

  - See to it that all control measures help each other rather than fight each other.

3.3.3 Unethical and Inappropriate Communication

Two other communication challenges you may face in the workplace is the occurrence of unethical as well as inappropriate communication.

Unethical Communication in the Workplace

One kind of communication that is looked down upon is unethical communication. This is communication that is immoral, encouraging deception and manipulation of messages. The most common manifestations of unethical communication in the workplace include:

- **Selective misquoting**

  This is twisting someone's words or ideas by taking parts of statements out of context. The resulting passage becomes problematic because its meaning, now separated from the original context, changes. Selective misquoting is often done to create false support for a claim or to make the original communicator of a statement lose their credibility.

- **Plagiarism**

  Plagiarism is taking someone else's thoughts, ideas, or words and presenting them as your own. It is a form of stealing often done to make one seem intelligent, reliable, and/or praiseworthy. Aside from being illegal, plagiarism is an unethical form of communication that would actually reduce rather than build one's credibility in the workplace.

- **Lying**

  In the workplace, lying comes in many forms. This may be as small as misreporting progress on certain tasks or as big as concealing important matters. Lying makes it difficult to build trust within the workplace and makes one lose their integrity.

Inappropriate Communication

Along with unethical communication, another problematic form of communication within the workplace is inappropriate communication. This is a type of communication that involves negative and/or unwanted messaging that is potentially harmful toward receivers. Common manifestations of inappropriate communication in the workplace include:

- **Using aggressive language**

   This is expressing your thoughts, ideas, or opinions aggressively. Forms of aggression would include being sarcastic, using harsh tones and words, and showing condescension towards those you are communicating with. Using aggressive language is likely to intimidate those you are speaking with and scare them away, keeping them from truly speaking their minds and being open about their actual thoughts for fear of how you would react.

- **Using racially offensive language**

   This involves using language that is meant to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate others on the basis of race. Racially offensive language includes racial slurs, jokes, or comments that belittle or stereotype certain racial groups, especially minorities and inappropriate or offensive terms.

- **Using gender-insensitive language**

   This involves using language that is meant to offend, insult, humiliate, or intimidate others on the basis of gender. Gender-insensitive language would include sexist jokes, comments, or remarks that promote gender stereotypes.

Resolving Unethical and Inappropriate Communication

To counteract unethical and inappropriate communication, there are key techniques you can use in framing your communication. These are:

- **Frame to achieve a clear purpose**

  All your communications must be aimed at achieving goals. Moreover, it is important that these goals are made clear, especially to you. You will be more confident about how others will receive and react to your messages if you yourself are sure about the purpose of your communication.

- **Frame the message to the audience and situation**

  Along with recognising and making the purpose of your communication the basis of your communications, it is equally important to consider the audience and the context of your communication. Knowing your audience would help you better understand the style and language you must use to effectively send your message.

  The same is true for the situation. Consider how much time you have, the urgency of your communication need, the type of media you would use to convey your message. Sufficient understanding of your audience and situation would help you frame your messaging better, leading to more effective communications.

- **Frame to build content understanding**

  Finally, remember that your messaging should ultimately aim towards understanding. The end-goal of your communications would always be to send messages that would be understood and accepted by its receivers. It is, therefore, essential to balance grounding your communications on a clear purpose with ensuring appropriateness with your target audience and situation and ultimately aiming to promote understanding of your content.

3.3.4 Use of Visual Prompts and Presentations

When you are conducting a presentation, there may be challenges that you are prone to experience. These are circumstances that will prevent you from delivering your intended message clearly and concisely. There are many reasons for such challenges. They may be caused by the very environment where you are presenting, the materials you are using to supplement your presentation, and/or you yourself as the presenter. The most common challenges you may face while presenting include:

- **Poor use of body language**

  When you are not communicating properly with your body, it can affect the overall delivery of your message. Being stiff, stuffing hands in your pockets, or playing with markers does not make it look like you are engaged in the presentation. It will be harder for your audience to keep engaged when you look bored with the topic you are discussing.

  Technique to Resolve This Challenge

  - Ensure that your body language supports your verbal language. Make use of proper hand gestures to indicate key points and maintain an open stance at all times. Do not be afraid to move around as you present. You should also be mindful of how you use your facial expressions. Show enthusiasm through these and maintain eye contact with your audience as you present.

- **Rambling**

  In truth, rambling is nothing more than the result of a lack of preparation. When you ramble, you are trying to cover up the fact that you do not know enough about the material you are presenting. Moreover, you likely have not rehearsed sufficiently to know the flow of your presentation. This, in turn, prevents the audience from understanding the main ideas or the key takeaway of the topic.

  Technique to Resolve This Challenge

  - Prepare well for your presentation. Ensure that you truly understand the information and/or instructions you are to discuss. Moreover, find the time to rehearse the flow of your presentation so you have an idea how it should go. You do not have to memorise your material word per word, but you need to have a key understanding of everything you will communicate to avoid rambling.

▪ **Difficult questions**

Of the communication challenges that you can experience while presenting, perhaps the most intimidating is having to deal with questions you cannot answer. By the very nature of your communication, you are meant to encourage discussion and engagement from your audience. However, some questions thrown at you may be too difficult to even answer.

Technique to Resolve This Challenge

- The truth is, you cannot fully prevent difficult questions during your presentation. However, you can sufficiently prepare for these. When you plan for your presentation, list down all the possible questions that may be asked of you and try to formulate answers for these. If this still proves to be insufficient, do not fret. It is okay to not have the answer to every question. Admit that you do not know the answer to an audience member's question, note the question, and tell them you will get back to them once you have done further research on the matter.

3.3.5 Use of Signages in the Workplace

You may also experience challenges when using signages in the workplace. This is often a result of such signages lacking clarity or visibility in the presentation of their intended message. Common challenges you may face include:

▪ **Positioning**

Signage cannot always be clearly seen from certain points of view. Although this is generally true for most signages, such proves to be problematic when, from a normal point of view, you cannot understand the message that is being depicted. If a sign is not on eye-level or if it should be searched for to find, then people will most likely not spot the sign and not follow the necessary action required.

Technique to Resolve This Challenge

- Before you finalise the position of your signages, ensure that they can easily be read and understood by employees. Test out different positionings for your signage. In doing this, you make seek help from employees who can test these out and give their feedback.

- **Contrast of sign against the environment**

  In relation to the position, you must also be mindful of the environment wherein you put your signs. Sometimes, the sign may not catch attention or be perceived properly, even if it is in an ideal position because other elements make people easily overlook it. This may be most visible when the contrast of the sign against the environment that contains it is a little off.

  Technique to Resolve This Challenge

  - Do an inspection of possible locations where you can place your sign. As you do, note the possible elements that may keep it from being properly seen. Remember that your signage needs to get others' attentions and not be overlooked for it to be effective.

- **Clarity of text**

  Perhaps the most critical challenge you can face with signages concerns the text that is being shown. When your text itself is problematic, it does not matter if it is in the right position and location. Having vague messages is especially challenging because it defeats the very purpose of signage. If a sign only provides a general warning, without clear action, it will cause confusion. People have different interpretations of vague messages, so people reading the sign may not respond the way you intend them to.

  Technique to Resolve This Challenge

  - Before you even produce a sign, check the text you want it to display. Ensure that this is clearly phrased and understood by seeking feedback from other employees. Present the text to them and confirm if their understanding of it is the same as your intended message.

3.3.6 Communication Outside of Workplace Policy

You may find yourself engaging in communication outside of the workplace policy. This would include instances where your communication is considered a fundamental violation, although it is not specified in your policy. Among the communication challenges discussed, these may be the most difficult to deal with because there are no clear guidelines for addressing them.

Perhaps the most common example of communication outside workplace policy involves personal communications of employees that do not concern work matters. This may include the use of one's personal social media to engage in problematic communication (e.g. spreading false news, using profane language, fighting with co-workers) and communication challenges that would occur outside of work hours and/or office premises between and/or among employees.

Due to the nature of this communication challenge, the resolution to be done would vary across organisations. To better understand this challenge and how to resolve it, the following examples are put forth:

- **Employees complaining about working through social media**

  This communication challenge occurs when employees use their personal social media accounts to post complains about work. This proves to be an issue because the kind of complains they publicise can destroy the image of the organisation to outsiders, including potential and existing stakeholders.

  To resolve such a challenge, organisations can opt to implement organisational training to educate employees on social media etiquette. This is because some employees may not be aware of the proper way to behave online. Organisations may also develop policies for the use of personal social media. This would further limit the occurrence of such incidents.

- **Employee conflict outside work**

  This communication challenge occurs when employees within the same organisation have personal conflicts outside of work. Among the possible challenges that are outside of organisational policy, this may be the hardest to deal with as the organisation cannot deal with conflict outside of work – be it work-related matters o office premises.

  The organisation can, however, step in if such conflict affects current working conditions. If in case the conflict does affect the work environment and culture, there are a number of resolution methods the organisation can implement. These would include mediation, grievance hearing and disciplinary hearing. Additionally, the organisation may opt to implement organisational adjustment to separate the conflicting parties.

Ultimately, it is up to the organisation to deal with such instances accordingly. The approach that will be done to address these may be a bit unconventional. You may need to think outside the box and work with existing resolution techniques meant for situations that you have prepared for.

Activity 4

Using the discussion in Section 3.3, match the given communication challenge with their respective resolution technique.

Clarity of text	Prepare sufficiently for your presentation. Ensure that you fully understand what you are meant to discuss.
Using aggressive language	Seek help from managers or supervisors who can mediate and keep everyone back on track.
Task conflict	Provide more than enough information regarding the risk and its potential impact.
Rambling	Check the text you want your sign to display. Seek feedback from employees as necessary.
Phenomenology of risk	The organisation is responsible for deciding how such challenges will be dealt with. The approach is likely to be unconventional and would draw inspiration from existing resolution techniques.
Employee fights outside of office premises	Frame messages to suit your audience and situation.

3.4 Obtain Confirmation on Outcomes of Communication Challenges to Ensure Issues Have Been Resolved

The fourth and final matter of business involved in facilitating workplace communication is to obtain confirmation on outcomes of communication challenges. This is to ensure that issues have been sufficiently resolved. Although there is no one strict way for confirming that communication challenges have been sufficiently resolved, there is a general process for doing so. Steps in this process include:

1. **Summarise the challenge encountered**

   Once your communication challenge has concluded, you must be able to sufficiently summarise what happened. In doing so, it is important that you take note of key points such as the persons involved, the date/s when it occurred, the events that transpired, and the subsequent outcomes of the challenge. For the most part, this step is done formally by means of preparing a report or formal document that outlines the details of your communication challenge. However, the level of detail required in this step may change depending on the severity of the challenge.

2. **Finalise resolution technique**

   Once you have documented the communication challenge that took place, you now finalise the technique you will use to resolve this. The previous section outlines the different techniques you can employ for the challenges you can face. In accomplishing this step, you may find it necessary to seek the help of relevant personnel. For instance, the selection of your techniques may be made with the employees directly involved in the challenge as well as a third-party consultant. You may also need to seek approval from superiors if the technique you are to employ has a larger scope or additional requirements.

3. **Enact resolution technique**

   After you have finalised the resolution technique you are to use, you can now enact this. This step is the heart of your process as it will be the point where your issues are resolved. Make sure that in doing this step, you are able to sufficiently address the concerns of the parties involved and follow the proper guidance in enacting your technique.

4. **Evaluate the resolution**

   Your work does not end once you have enacted your resolution techniques. To be sure that you have indeed resolved the issues and overcome the challenge, you must evaluate the resolution technique that was employed. This would entail seeking feedback from all those involved in the communication challenge. Reach out to them and ask them how they feel about the way the matter was handled. Further, let them know that they can open up about any concerns they still have so these can be resolved.

Notes

Key Points: Chapter 3

- By using interpersonal skills effectively, you can build relationships with team members and clients as well as facilitate respectful interaction.

- Facilitating respectful communication amongst others entails giving special consideration to the needs of those who come from diverse backgrounds.

- Individuals you must be especially considerate of include those with special needs and those with disabilities.

- To resolve communication challenges, you must employ techniques that will require you to use problem solving and decision making skills effectively.

- Once your communication challenge has concluded, you must effectively resolve it and confirm that the issues it involves have been addressed.

Chapter 3 – 'True' or 'False' Quiz

Tick 'True' if the statement is correct, and 'False' if not.	True	False
Active listening means giving your full attention to whoever is speaking and avoiding the use of both verbal and non-verbal cues that can distract them.	☐	☐
When communicating with individuals who have disabilities, you must remember to treat them as you would treat others and avoid making them feel isolated or differentiated.	☐	☐
In resolving face-to-face client conflict, it is sufficient to be respectful and use the verbal and non-verbal cues as you communicate.	☐	☐
As outlined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, consultation with workers regarding work health and safety matters is required for all organisations.	☐	☐
Unethical communication encourages deception and manipulation of messages; it is considered immoral and fundamentally wrong.	☐	☐
To confirm that your communication challenge has been resolved, you must seek feedback from the parties involved.	☐	☐

# Chapter 4: Monitor and Support Team Communication

The fourth and final stage in applying communication strategies in the workplace involves monitoring and supporting team communication. As with any endeavour, your work does not stop with the execution of your plans. In the spirit of continuous improvement, you must make an effort to closely examine your communication efforts. Building from your findings, you must then determine how these can be further developed and how you can provide guidance and support for others.

The process of monitoring and supporting team communication involves four subsets. You begin by ensuring that all communication is consistent with legislative and organisational requirements. Then, you will provide performance feedback and additional support to others when such is required.

Along with giving feedback, you must also seek feedback and assistance from others to improve your own communication techniques. Finally, you must collate and report any important information and unresolved issues to relevant superiors to ensure that all problems you encounter are sufficiently addressed.

4.1 Ensure All Communication is Consistent with Legislative and Organisational Requirements

The first step in monitoring and supporting team communication involves ensuring that all communication is consistent with the necessary requirements. These requirements come in the form of your organisational and legislative requirements which have been introduced in Section 1.5.
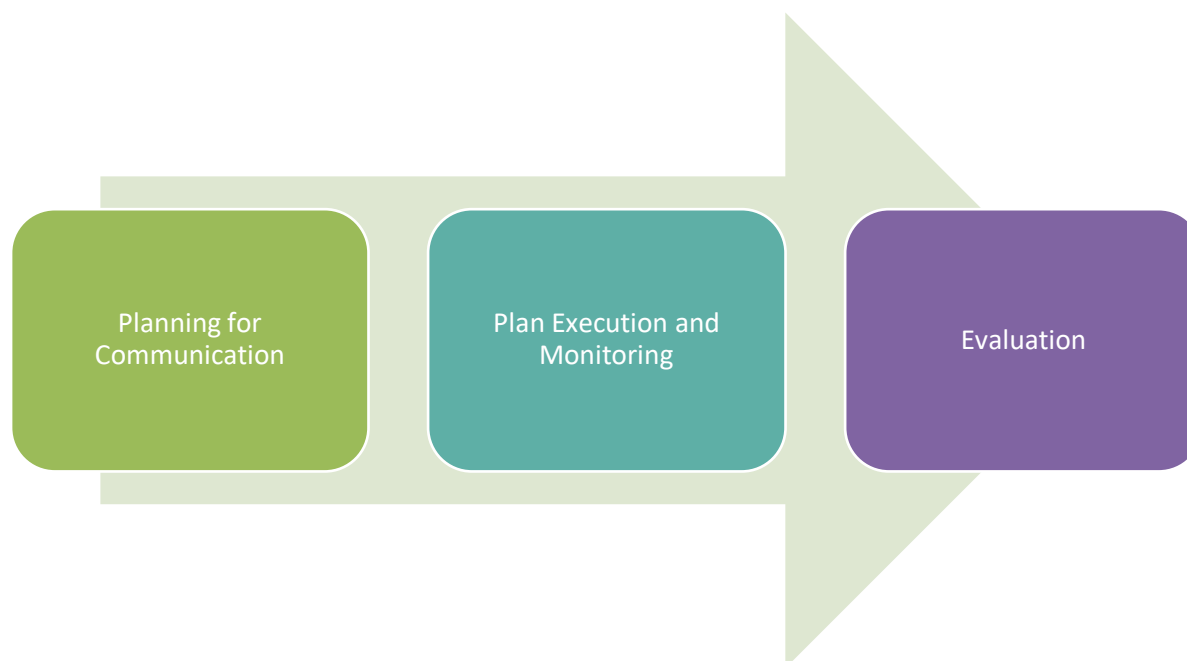
The process of ensuring that all your communication is consistent with both internal and external requirements is straightforward, and it involves three key phases. These are:

1. **Planning for Communication**

    As with any undertaking, it is vital that you start your process right. Sufficient planning will enable you to be on the right path. As you brainstorm ideas for different communication initiatives, ensure that you give time and consideration to the different requirements you have in place.

    In Section 1.5, it was reiterated that organisational requirements must be the foundation for your communication practices. The most effective way of making sure that your communication is aligned with these requirements is by actively planning your communication with these in mind from the very beginning. The same is true for your legislative requirements. From the onset, you must make it a point to adhere to the different guidelines provided by such and avoid any violations.

2. Plan Execution and Monitoring

It is not sufficient that your planning is done in alignment with your requirements. As you execute your different communication practices, keep them in check. This means actively monitoring them to ensure that they are properly being implemented. Sometimes, your planning may be sufficient and free of issues. However, in the process of your execution, you may find that some points are lost in translation.

As you monitor your communications, challenges that you may or may not have originally planned for may also arise. You must address these as they come. It is once again important to remember your requirements as you resolve these issues. Everything from your actual communication practices to your processes and techniques for addressing any issues must be done in accordance with both internal and external requirements.

3. Evaluation

Finally, to make sure that your communication initiatives are consistent with your requirements, you must evaluate them. This is especially important when the communication activities you engage in involve projects and/or events that have a clear start and endpoint. You must go over everything that took place and determine if every aspect of your communication remained relevant and consistent with the necessary requirements.

During this step, you must also look into points for improvement and possible violations that have been made. Assess these and try to determine the reasons they occurred. Using this knowledge, develop ways to realign your communication and avoid further inconsistencies.

4.2 Provide Performance Feedback and Additional Support to Others When Required

The next order of business in monitoring and supporting team communication involves providing performance feedback as well as additional support to others when required. This is especially necessary when you have employees who are underperforming or would themselves take the initiative to improve their performance.

4.2.1 Providing Feedback

Feedback is a reliable way of making employees aware of their performance. If you are able to give effective feedback, employees will not only be able to assess how well they were able to communicate and fulfil the tasks required of them but also recognise how they can further improve.

To make sure that the feedback you provide is effective, key techniques you can take note of include:

- **Give feedback in a timely fashion**

  Give feedback at the right time. As a general rule, feedback is meant to be given immediately after the task or activity you are evaluating has been completed. This will enable employees to clearly remember and understand the points you are referencing in your evaluation.

In some cases, however, you may need to delay providing feedback. This would include situations when conflict and other challenges arise. During these times, it is best to give your feedback a day or two after the disagreement to ensure that everyone has had time to calm down and reflect on what has happened. By doing so, you ensure that the feedback you provide will be met with more openness.

- **Provide detailed feedback**

  Do not be afraid to give employees detailed comments regarding their performance. Highlight what went well and what can be improved, while ensuring that the feedback you provide is well-grounded and fair. It is also important to be proactive in your feedback. This means giving clear guidance and suggestions for the employee to improve their performance.

- **Take time to develop feedback**

  Do not make feedback for the sake of complying with requirements. Put sufficient effort into formulating your feedback and evaluating the performance of your employees. Though it is a tedious and time-consuming task, remember that the feedback you provide will enable employees to understand how well they have performed and how they can continuously improve. Take the task seriously and make time to develop your feedback.

- **Treat feedback as a continual process**

Recognise the value of not only giving feedback but receiving it as well. Seek feedback on your feedback. Ask employees how they have understood the points you were trying to make and recognise how you can further improve the quality of the feedback you. Treat feedback as a continual process for both you as the provider and employees as the receivers. That way, the feedback you provide gets better as time passes just as their performance does.

4.2.2 Providing Additional Support

Along with providing feedback, other ways through which you can provide additional support for others include:

- **Training initiatives**

  Perhaps the most fundamental way of providing support is through training initiatives. The kind of support training provides relies on formal and technical knowledge that would enable employees to improve their performance. There are different ways through which you can provide training to employees. Some of the most widely used methods include:

  o **Formal instruction**

    This method involves a lecture-style learning method where trainees would be situated in a classroom setting. They would receive training from an expert who plays the role of the teacher.

  o **On-the-job training**

    This method requires trainees to learn the skills and knowledge involved in a task by actually performing the task required of them. They will be guided by an expert and will have actual firsthand experience in performing said task.

  o **Simulation**

    This method is similar to on-the-job training. However, instead of actually performing the set tasks, employees will work on tasks similar to those they will actually encounter in the workplace.

  o **Self-directed learning**

    As the name suggests, this method relies on the trainee's ability to learn the necessary skills and knowledge required by teaching themselves. Employees will be provided with the necessary materials (i.e. manuals, supplementary videos) and will be empowered to learn about these at their own pace.

- **Coaching**

Coaching is another way through which you can provide support for employees. It involves a short-term development process that follows a structured and formal approach to helping an employee develop. Since coaching is mainly concerned with performance, it focuses on the required knowledge, tools, and opportunities that will enable employees to improve their communication.

The timeframe for coaching is usually six months to a year, and coaches usually have a specific goal set for their coachees. In this case, the goal is to improve the communication of employees. The selection of a coach is made on the basis of their area of expertise, which is an area where their designated coachee needs support.

One key technique you have to note in using coaching as a method of providing support for employees is establishing SMART goals. These must directly concern the performance of the employee and aim to improve such in a set timeframe. Using the SMART criteria to form goals is ideal as it will help you balance aiming high and being realistic. This will make it easier for you and your coachee to pace yourselves.

- **Mentoring**

By definition, mentoring is a long-term process that follows a rather informal approaching in developing for an employee. It follows the format of generalised advice and guidance for career development, with a specific focus on the areas where an employee needs additional support. Mentoring usually involves a senior and experienced mentor and an inexperienced and promising mentee. The former provides support for the latter through the knowledge, advice, skills, and expertise the mentor imparts.

Mentorship is beneficial not only for the mentor and the mentee but also for the company where the mentee will practise what they are being taught. At the minimum, relationships between the mentor and the mentee would last for a year. If the mentor and the mentee are well-matched, their relationship can last a lifetime. Through mentorship, employees can develop not only in terms of their communication but also holistically. This benefits their professional career, the teams where they work, and the organisation that they are a part of.

Activity 5

Identify at least three key characteristics of coaching and of mentoring that differentiate them from one another.

Coaching	Mentoring

4.3 Seek Feedback and Assistance from Others to Improve Own Communication Techniques

Along with providing feedback and assistance with others, the process of monitoring and supporting team communication also involves seeking feedback and assistance from others so that you yourself can improve your own communication techniques.

4.3.1 Seeking Feedback and Assistance

As mentioned in the preceding section, feedback and assistance are invaluable in improving performance in communication engagements. This applies not only to employees but also to you. Given this, you must be open to seeking feedback and assistance from others as well.

- **Seeking Feedback**

  Seeking feedback means reaching out to relevant personnel who can help evaluate your communication techniques. There are different methods through which you can seek feedback. This may be done through informal means such as asking the relevant personnel about their opinions on the way you talk. It can also be done formally, through face-to-face meetings, calls, written evaluations, etc.

  The most important thing to remember in seeking feedback is that you be fair and unbiased as you receive it. The goal of feedback is to help you assess your performance, and you should accept the views held and comments made by others so that you can improve your communication techniques.

- **Seeking Assistance**

  In line with the discussion in Section 4.2, you can seek assistance through training, coaching as well as mentoring. The different training methods may be helpful in improving your communication techniques, especially if the guidance you require is quite technical. On the other hand, coaching will help your performance-driven needs while mentoring will develop not only your communication techniques but your overall performance as an employee.

  In seeking assistance, it is important to keep an open mind. The personnel who would be providing you assistance are experts in their respective areas of concern, and they know what they are doing. Do not be afraid of having the tables turned and being the one who requires guidance. Developing your communication techniques is an ongoing and continuous process that everyone should engage in.

4.3.2 Relevant Personnel and Sources
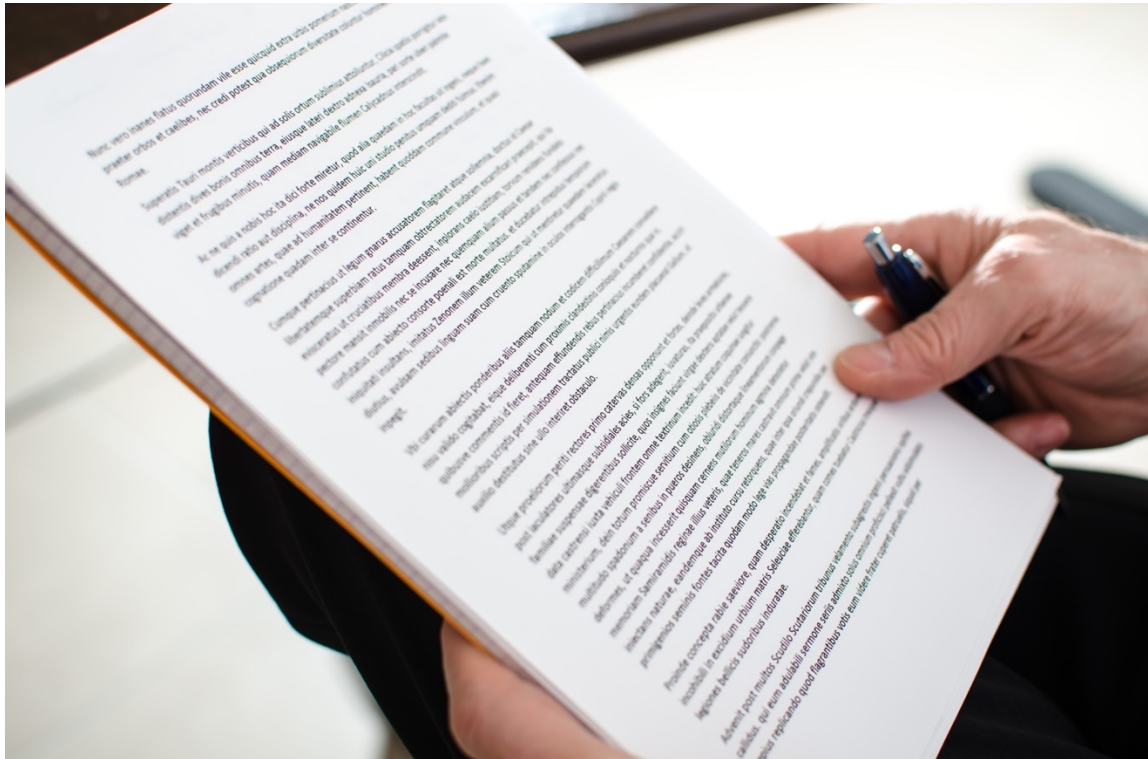
There are both relevant personnel and sources that can help you improve your communication techniques. The personnel you can reach out to include your colleagues, supervisors, and experts. Colleagues can give you reliable feedback on your communication techniques as they experience working with you firsthand. Supervisors can do this and also provide assistance as necessary. Experts who may be from within and outside the company are also key persons who can provide you with guidance in enhancing your communication techniques.

On the other hand, the sources you can use to assess your communication techniques may include both human and physical sources. The personnel above may be sources of key information that would enable you to develop your communication techniques. Along with them, however, you can work on your techniques by seeking relevant materials, guides, documents, etc. that can provide clear and easy to follow instructions on how you can improve your communication.

4.4 Collate and Report Any Important Information and Unresolved Issues to Relevant Superiors

The last order of business involved in monitoring and supporting team communication involves collating and reporting any important information as well as unresolved issues to the relevant personnel. Collating is the process of gathering all the necessary information – in this case, matters concerning issues encountered in the process of communicating. These are matters worth reporting to relevant superiors who can help you address these.

4.4.1 Evaluating Communication Processes

Evaluating communication processes would involve looking into documents and seeking insights from others involved in the process. The first would involve reviewing the different records you have of the different communication processes you have in place. In checking these materials, you must seek issues and challenges experienced, patterns or trends that may have emerged, etc.

Along with this, you can also evaluate your processes by seeking feedback from employees. You can ask them regarding their experiences with the different processes you have in place informally or use formal methods for doing so. Three ways through which you can formally collect feedback are:

1. **Administer surveys**

   This is particularly useful for when you need to reach out to a lot of people. If your process involves many people and you would like to find out the feedback of as many people as you can, this is the ideal method. Surveys are, however, limited to closed questions. This is because seeking responses to open questions from a large number of people is inefficient. The responses you would receive from this method would be numerical, and you will need to analyse these results statistically. Surveys can be administered by giving out physical or digital/electronic forms to your target audience.

2. **Schedule interviews**

   Interviews are an effective way to evaluate communication processes by means of seeking in-depth feedback from those involved in the process. Unlike surveys which are mostly restricted to closed questions, interviews allow you to have free-flowing discussions where employees can open up about their experiences extensively. However, you must carefully select who you will be interviewing as this task can be time-consuming. You cannot plan to interview everyone as this would be inefficient. Interviews can be both face-to-face or aided by technology (i.e. video or phone interviews).

3. Hold focus group discussions

A third method of obtaining feedback is through focus group discussions. This method is similar to interviews as it allows you to reach out to key persons and seek their in-depth insights on the processes that they are involved in. However, the main difference is that you would have multiple people come together, and aside from just seeking their responses and interviewing them, you will encourage them to discuss their thoughts with one another (i.e. engage in a group discussion).

Additionally, you may also find it useful to seek third-party help in evaluating your communication processes. This is especially important for the processes which may be more complex or too difficult for you to assess on your own (e.g. due to biases towards the process). Insights from a third-party may provide fair and unbiased assessments of your communication process, allowing you to establish key information with more ease.

4.4.2 Identifying Areas for Improvement, Important Information, and Unresolved Issues

As you evaluate your communication processes, you are not merely looking back at everything and making a summary of what has been accomplished. There are key findings which you are paying close attention to and seeking out. These are your areas for improvement, important information, and unresolved issues. Though the three are closely related, there are fundamental differences among them.

- **Areas for Improvement**

    Areas for improvement refer to the parts of your processes that you can further develop to promote more effective communication. These include parts where you have already performed satisfactorily but can still improve further as well as parts where you simply did not meet your goals. Areas for improvement usually concern the performance of employees. The employees themselves may need to improve their performance to develop the process or the systems and mechanisms they work with need to be improved so that the employees can perform more effectively.

- **Important Information**

    Important information refers to findings that are vital to your process. These include data that would affect your processes positively, negatively, or in a neutral manner. You may have found causal relationships or possible correlations among different factors involved in your processes, for instance. This information needs to be properly noted and documented so that you can further investigate it and find out if it can be used to your advantage to improve your processes.

- **Unresolved Issues**

    Finally, unresolved issues refer to the different challenges you have faced along the way that you were not able to resolve. The truth is, not every issue you encounter can easily be addressed. However, this does not mean that you just let them go once your processes or activities have concluded. You must acknowledge them and attempt to understand them. This is done to determine if anything can still be done to try and resolve them and/or prevent or lessen their occurrence in the future.

To effectively identify areas for improvement, you must simply be keen on your evaluation of your communication processes. Pay close attention to findings that may be of interest. Take time in your evaluations and carefully assess all the information you have. Moreover, it may once again be useful to seek third-party help. Personnel who have areas of expertise that may be relevant to your endeavour may help make your process more efficient, and there may be particular processes that are more difficult to assess than others. Do not be scared to seek help, as necessary.

4.4.3 Collating and Reporting Information to Relevant Supervisors

The final output of your evaluation process is a formal document that summarises all of your findings. This document would highlight key findings and insights that would help others make a meaningful assessment of the communication processes you have in place.

To create this document, you must effectively collate key findings from various materials. These include records and reports on your processes, feedback from employees, and insights from third-party consultants or experts. Moreover, you must also incorporate proof and documentation of your processes through photos, actual sample materials used in the process, and other forms of evidence that would substantiate your findings. It is important that your collated findings highlight key points that need to be given attention. Finally, you may also provide recommendations for improvement in your report.

Once you have collated your findings, you can then report these to the relevant supervisors. These would include your direct officers as well as other superiors who have the power to make decisions or take the necessary action to improve your communication processes. The act of reporting your findings is, in itself, a communication practice. It is, therefore, crucial that you effectively present your information and keep in mind the different strategies, techniques, and tips outlined in this resource.

Activity 6

Using the discussion in Chapter 4, find at least six of the eight hidden terms in the puzzle below, which are relevant to the task of monitoring and supporting team communication. Then, briefly define each identified word in the space below.

```
E  P  D  H  I  H  L  E  T  F  F  T  A
I  N  T  E  R  V  I  E  W  U  V  K  S
E  L  S  W  Y  S  N  L  O  Y  I  N  S
V  S  X  I  X  E  J  P  E  I  G  E  I
A  A  F  Q  M  W  V  V  R  N  C  E  S
L  C  Z  E  L  U  R  E  I  X  D  K  T
U  O  O  K  E  U  L  R  W  X  G  B  A
A  N  E  A  S  D  O  A  I  K  B  B  N
T  Z  K  X  C  T  B  Z  T  E  A  W  C
I  B  T  V  N  H  O  A  R  I  U  M  E
O  E  H  E  S  Q  I  M  C  A  O  N  C
N  H  M  W  V  Z  C  N  N  K  K  N  N
O  W  R  E  Y  V  J  T  G  Y  C  C  M
```

List of Identified Words and Definitions:

Notes

Key Points: Chapter 4

- You must ensure that your communication practices are aligned with the legislative and organisational requirements you have.

- To effectively provide support for others, you must be ready to provide them with feedback on their performance and also additional support.

- Likewise, you must be open to seeking feedback and assistance from others to improve your own communication techniques.

- The support and assistance you can give as well as receive may come in the form of training initiatives, mentoring, and/or coaching.

- You must sufficiently evaluate your communication processes to determine how well these were executed and how they can be further improved.

- Your findings must be collated and then reported to relevant supervisors so that the necessary actions may be done to develop your communication processes.

Chapter 4 – 'True' or 'False' Quiz

Tick 'True' if the statement is correct, and 'False' if not.	True	False
You must ensure that all communication is consistent with your requirements from the planning until the evaluation stage of your process.	☐	☐
You must always give feedback right after the task or activity you are evaluating has been completed.	☐	☐
Your colleagues can provide you with meaningful feedback on your communication techniques since they work with you directly.	☐	☐
Training provides support by giving employees formal and technical knowledge that would help improve their performance.	☐	☐
In seeking feedback and assistance for the improvement of your own communication techniques, relying on your colleagues and supervisors' feedback and assistance is more than enough.	☐	☐
Unresolved issues refer to the different communication challenges you have faced along the way that you were not able to resolve.	☐	☐

Summary

"The world rewards those who take responsibility for their own success."

Curt Gerrish

The ability to communicate effectively can determine success in any context. An individual who can communicate properly is likely to achieve what they have set out to do. Teams that communicate openly can collaborate and work towards shared objectives well. Organisations that promote good communication practices can likewise achieve their goals more easily.

Communication is an invaluable element in any successful organisation. In the same way, the ability to make use of communication strategically is an indicator of one's potential and capacity to lead. From both a macro and micro-perspective, it is, therefore, vital that you develop the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable you to use communication effectively.

As you take on the challenge of applying communication strategies in the workplace, remember that it is a continuous process. Though you begin with planning and laying out your requirements, you do not stop with facilitating communications and making use of your strategies. To ensure that you keep improving, you must monitor and evaluate your use of communication in the workplace and likewise provide guidance to further develop it through time.

References

These are some references that we feel may be of assistance to you in completing the Assessment for this unit of competency:

- *Age discrimination act 2004*. (2004). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A01302

- Baskerville, P. (2013, August). *Informal meeting*. Skillmaker. https://www.skillmaker.edu.au/informal-meeting/#:~:text=Define%20Informal%20Meeting%20%E2%80%93%20An%20informal

- Cumbo, C. (2017, October 12). *The four communication styles: How to understand yourself and your audience*. Pearce Center for Professional Communication. http://pearce.caah.clemson.edu/the-four-communication-styles-how-to-understand-yourself-and-your-audience/

- *Disability discrimination act 1992*. (2012). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A04426

- Doyle, J. P. (2017). *Communicating with people with disabilities*. Conference Calls Unlimited. https://www.conferencecallsunlimited.com/communicating-with-people-with-disabilities/

- *Formal vs. informal presentation style*. (2019, March 1). Presentation Training Institute. https://www.presentationtraininginstitute.com/formal-vs-informal-presentation-style/#:~:text=Formal%20Presentations

- *Intercultural communication: High and low context cultures*. (2019, January 31). Southeastern University Online. https://online.seu.edu/articles/high-and-low-context-cultures/

- Oetting, J. (2018). *7 strategies for handling & resolving conflicts with clients*. Hubspot. https://blog.hubspot.com/agency/conflicts-clients

- Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2016, May 25). *Communicating with aboriginal and torres strait islander audiences | department of the prime minister and cabinet*. Pmc.Gov.Au. https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/communicating-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-audiences

- *Privacy act 1988*. (2012). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03712

- Rabinowitz, P. (n.d.). *Chapter 40. maintaining quality performance | section 3. obtaining and using feedback from participants | main section | community tool box*. Community Tool Box. Retrieved October 7, 2020, from https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/maintain/maintain-quality-performance/feedback-from-clients/main

- *Racial discrimination act 1975*. (2015). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00274

- *Sex discrimination act 1984*. (2012). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02868

- Shonk, K. (2020, March 26). *3 types of conflict and how to address them*. PON - Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/conflict-resolution/types-conflict/#:~:text=In%20particular%2C%20three%20types%20of

- *Work health and safety act 2011*. (2012). Federal Register of Legislation. https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2011A00137

End of Document