

MODULE TITLE: Leading Workplace Communication

MODULE CODE: NRC LAU 3M15 0911

NOMINAL DURATION: 35hrs

MODULE CONTENTS

I Introduction

LO1 Communicate information about workplace processes (15HRS)

1.1 *communication methods*

- ❖ Multiple operations involving several topics areas
- ❖ Methods of gain extra information
- ❖ Correct sources of information
- ❖ Correct information selection and organization
- ❖ Under take verbal and written report
- ❖ Communication skills maintenance

LO2 Lead workplace discussion(12HRS)

2.1 Response to workplace issues

- ❖ Observation and provision of immediate response to workplace issues
- ❖ Constructive contributions to workplace
- ❖ Goals/objectives and action plan in the workplace & communication

LO3 Identify and communicate issues arising in the workplace(8HRS)

3.1 Identification of issues and problems

- ❖ Dialogue initiation with appropriate staff/personnel
- ❖ Communication problems and issues

1. COMMUNICATE INFORMATION ABOUT WORKPLACE PROCESSES

- Method of communication
- Communication skills
- Communication tools
- Questioning techniques

2. LEAD WORKPLACE DISCUSSIONS

- Method/techniques of discussion
- How to lead discussion
- How to solicit response

3. IDENTIFY AND COMMUNICATE ISSUES ARISING IN THE WORKPLACE

- Identify problems and issues
- Organizing information on problem and issues
- Relating problems and issues
- Communication barriers affecting workplace discussions

UNIT OF COMPETENCY : **LEAD WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION**

MODULE TITLE	:	LEADING WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION
MODULE DESCRIPTOR	:	This module covers the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to prepare different reports required in the workplace
NOMINAL DURATION	:	6 hours
PREREQUISITE	:	Before entering this module the student/trainee must be able to participate in workplace communication

SUMMARY OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this module the students/trainees will be able to:

- LO1. Communicate information about workplace processes
- LO2. Lead workplace discussions
- LO3. Identify and communicate issues arising in the workplace

LO1. COMMUNICATE INFORMATION ABOUT WORKPLACE PROCESSES

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

1. Appropriate communication method is selected.
2. Multiple operations involving several topic areas are communicated.
3. Questions are used to gain extra information.
4. Correct sources of information are identified.
5. Information is selected and sequenced correctly when required.
6. Verbal and written reporting are maintained in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.

CONTENTS:

- Method of communication
- Communication skills
- Communication tools
- Questioning techniques

CONDITIONS:

The students/trainees must be provided with the following:

- Simulated workplace environment
- Communication tools
- Variety of information's

METHODOLOGIES:

- Discussion
- Role play
- Brainstorming

ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Direct observation
- Interview

LO2. LEAD WORKPLACE DISCUSSIONS

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

1. Response to workplace issues are sought
2. Response to workplace issues are provided when sought
3. Constructive contributions are made to workplace discussion on such issues as production, quality and safety
4. Goals and aims of actions under taken in the workplace are communicated

CONTENTS

- Method/techniques of discussion
- How to lead discussion
- How to solicit response

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The students/trainees must be provided with the following:

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- Communication tools
- Variety of information's

METHODOLOGIES:

- Discussion
- Role play
- Brainstorming

ASSESSMENT METHODS:

- Direct observation
- Interview

LO3. IDENTIFY AND COMMUNICATE ISSUES ARISING IN THE WORKPLACE

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. Issues and problems are identified as they arise
2. Information regarding problems and issues are organized coherently to ensure clear and effective communication
3. Dialog is initiated with appropriate personnel
4. Communication problems and issues are addressed as they arises

CONTENTS:

- Identify problems and issues
- Organizing information on problem and issues
- Relating problems and issues
- Communication barriers affecting workplace discussions

CONDITIONS:

The students/trainees must be provided with the following:

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MODULE TITLE: Leading Workplace Communication

MODULE CONTENTS

I Introduction

Workplace communication is the process of exchanging information, both verbal and non-verbal, within an organization. An organization may consist of employees from different parts of the society. In order to unite the activities of all employees, [communication](#) is crucial. Communicating necessary information to the entire workforce becomes necessary. Effective workplace communication ensures that all the organizational objectives are achieved.

We all know the importance of communication in our daily lives. Nothing can take place without some method of communication being used to express ourselves for whatever purpose.

Communication is even more valuable in a business environment as there are several parties involved. Various stakeholders, whether they are customers, employees or the media, are always sending important information to each other at all times.

The best communication methods succeed in putting across the right message in a clear, unambiguous way that gets noticed by the target audience, whilst also saving on time and cost. Good communicators succeed in choosing the best medium of communication for the particular purpose in mind.

LO1 Communicate information about workplace processes (15HRS)

1.1 communication methods

Methods of Communication

Understanding the communication process alone will not guarantee success for managers or an organization. Managers need to be aware of the methods used in the communication process.

The following are some different methods of communication that are commonly used within the workplace:

1. Oral communication

Oral communication is simply speaking. This can be done one-on-one, in a group setting, over the phone, etc. Verbal communication is a personal means of communication and should be utilized more than just emails or phone calls when possible. Being able to see the person you are

communicating with face to face can help you gauge their response by reading their body language and actively participating in dialogue. **Oral/Verbal Communication** is the ability to express your thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a way that another person or group can understand them as you intended.

When you use verbal communication, be aware of your tone of voice, speed, and inflection. Avoid sarcasm or angry tones, as they can put the people you are speaking with on the defensive. When speaking to a group or your team, make sure you speak loudly and clearly so everyone can understand you. Arrange for a microphone if you are addressing a group in a large room.

Oral/ Verbal communication is best when you need to discuss something in detail, or when complimenting or reprimanding someone.

A large proportion of oral communication is directly involved in communications management. For example, if a manager does not converse or make it clear to a sales team, this may lead to differences in objectives and achievements.

There are two aspects of oral communication; active listening and constructive feedback.

i. Active Listening

This is where the person who receives the message pays attention to the information, interprets and remembers.

As you would be aware, listening helps you to pay attention and following are some points which illustrate active listening.

- Making eye contact with the relevant party
- Making sure to clarify questions if it's not clear
- Avoiding using gestures which are distracting or uncomfortable

ii. Constructive Feedback

This is where managers fail most of the time. Feedback needs to be constructive and then it will help the employees to shape up their performance instead of mere criticism.

Conclusion

Communication management is vital for any organization irrespective of its size. It contributes to achieving the company's overall objectives as well creates a positive and friendly environment.

An effective communication process within the organization will lead to an increase in profits, high employee satisfaction, and brand recognition.

Many times, when people think of the word communication, they think of an exchange of information and ideas through words. However, verbal communication is just one small part of communication. There are many different methods of communications and determining which is right for you and your organization is an important decision.

2. Written communication

Written Communication is the ability to express your thoughts, feelings, and ideas in writing in a way that another person or group can understand them as you intended.

You can't avoid written communication in the workplace; it's everywhere. Emails, memos, reports, and other written documents are all part of every day business life.

Written communication is the most appropriate when detailed instructions are required, when something needs to be documented, or when the person is too far away to easily speak with over the phone or in person.

Email is a lifesaver for many people, especially in the business world. If you rely on emails and memos to conduct your business, it's very important to portray a professional image. Don't use abbreviations unless they pertain to your field, and always use spell check and read over your email before you send it to make sure it's clear and concise. Emails should be brief and to the point.

3. Non-verbal communication

Nonverbal messages are unspoken and more difficult to interpret than verbal messages, but are just as important. This is particularly true when you think that someone is saying one thing and showing body language that tells a different story. Nonverbal cues are often neglected during interpersonal communication. A type of unspoken communication is writing. Communication in writing is powerful and lasting. Whether you write a letter, a memo, or an email message, written communication can be recalled word for word. Spoken communication is often misquoted and misremembered. Writing lasts a long time. So, think carefully about written communication.

Non-verbal communication plays a large role in the way you communicate with others. Unless you're using sign language, however, you probably don't want to rely on it as your sole means of communication.

You do, however, need to be aware of it. Your gestures, eye contact and movement, and the way you stand and sit all convey a message to the person you are communicating with. Use gestures appropriately, or leave your hands at your sides. Don't fidget, which is distracting, and avoid crossing your arms, which sends off the appearance of being angry or closed off. Always look the person you are speaking to in the eye, and don't roll your eyes or stare while they talk.

Non verbal communication refers to the use of body language as a method of communication. This method will include gestures, actions, physical appearance as well as facial appearance and attitude.

Although most of these methods are still in use for a larger part of the organization, the usage of email and other electronic mediums as a method of communication has lessened the need for face to face communication.

This sometimes leads to situations where both parties involved do not trust or comfortable with each other and also the messages can be easily misinterpreted

Which method is right for me?

There is not one "right" way to communicate, but you should be aware of what is appropriate and when. Your chosen method of communication is dependant on the situation. Put yourself in your employees' shoes. If you needed to have a certain message conveyed to you, think first how you would like to receive it. Use your good judgment of the situation and be considerate of your employees and you will be an effective communicator.

1.1.1 Multiple operations involving several topics areas

Multiple operations involving several topic areas are communicated.

Communication skills

The purpose of communication is to get your message across to others clearly and unambiguously. Doing this involves effort from both the sender of the message and the receiver..

In fact, communication is only successful when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication. By successfully getting your message across, you convey your thoughts and ideas effectively. When not successful, the thoughts and ideas that you convey do not necessarily reflect your own, causing a communications breakdown and creating roadblocks that stand in the way of your goals – both personally and professionally.

In a recent survey of recruiters from companies with more than 50,000 employees, communication skills were cited as the single more important decisive factor in choosing managers. Communication skills, including written and oral presentations, as well as an ability to work with others, are the main factor contributing to job success.

In spite of the increasing importance placed on communication skills, many individuals continue to struggle with this, unable to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively – whether in verbal or written format. This inability makes it nearly impossible for them to compete effectively in the workplace, and stands in the way of career progression. Getting your message across is paramount to progressing. To do this, you must understand what your message is, what audience you are sending it to, and how it will be perceived. You must also weigh-in the circumstances surrounding your communications, such as situational and cultural context.

The ability to communicate effectively is important in relationships, education and work. Here are some steps and tips to help you develop good communication skills

1. Understanding the Basics of Communication Skills

- i. **Know what communication really is.** Communication is the process of transferring signals/messages between a sender and a receiver through various methods (written words, nonverbal cues, spoken words). It is also the mechanism we use to establish and modify relationships.
- ii. **Have courage to say what you think.** Be confident in knowing that you can make worthwhile contributions to conversation. Take time each day to be aware of your opinions and feelings so you can adequately convey them to others. Individuals who are hesitant to speak because they do not feel their input would be worthwhile need not fear. What is important or worthwhile to one person may not be to another and may be more so to someone else.
- iii. **Practice.** Developing advanced communication skills begins with simple interactions. Communication skills can be practiced every day in settings that range from the social to the professional. New skills take time to refine, but each time you use your communication skills, you open yourself to opportunities and future partnerships.

2. Engage Your Audience

- i. Make eye contact. Whether you are speaking or listening, looking into the eyes of the person with whom you are conversing can make the interaction more successful. Eye contact conveys interest and encourages your partner to be interested in you in return.

One technique to help with this is to consciously look into one of the listener's eyes and then move to the other eye. Going back and forth between the two makes your eyes appear to sparkle. Another trick is to imagine a letter "T" on the listener's face ,with the cross bar being an imaginary line across the eye brows and the vertical line coming down the center of the nose. Keep your eyes scanning that "T" zone.

- ii. **Use gestures.** These include gestures with your hands and face. Make your whole body talk. Use smaller gestures for individuals and small groups. The gestures should get larger as the group that one is addressing increases in size.
- iii. **Don't send mixed messages.** Make your words, gestures, facial expressions and tone match. Disciplining someone while smiling sends a mixed message and is therefore ineffective. If you have to deliver a negative message, make your words, facial expressions, and tone match the message.
- iv. **Be aware of what your body is saying.** Body language can say so much more than a mouthful of words. An open stance with arms relaxed at your sides tells anyone around you that you are approachable and open to hearing what they have to say.

Arms crossed and shoulders hunched, on the other hand, suggest disinterest in conversation or unwillingness to communicate. Often, communication can be stopped before it starts by body language that tells people you don't want to talk.

Appropriate posture and an approachable stance can make even difficult conversations flow more smoothly.

- v. **Manifest constructive attitudes and beliefs.** The attitudes you bring to communication will have a huge impact on the way you compose yourself and interact with others. Choose to be honest, patient, optimistic, sincere, respectful, and accepting of others. Be sensitive to other people's feelings, and believe in others' competence.
 - vi. **Develop effective listening skills:** Not only should one be able to speak effectively; one must listen to the other person's words and engage in communication on what the other person is speaking about. Avoid the impulse to listen only for the end of their sentence so that you can blurt out the ideas or memories your mind while the other person is speaking.
3. Use Your Words
- i. **Enunciate your words.** Speak clearly and don't mumble. If people are always asking you to repeat yourself, try to do a better job of articulating yourself in a better manner.
 - ii. **Pronounce your words correctly.** People will judge your competency through your vocabulary. If you aren't sure of how to say a word, don't use it.
 - iii. **Use the right words.** If you're not sure of the meaning of a word, don't use it. Grab a dictionary and start a daily habit of learning one new word per day. Use it sometime in your conversations during the day.
 - iv. **Slow your speech down.** People will perceive you as nervous and unsure of yourself if you talk fast. However, be careful not to slow down to the point where people begin to finish your sentences just to help you finish.

4. Use Your Voice

- i. **Develop your voice – A high or whiny voice is not perceived to be one of authority.** In fact, a high and soft voice can make you sound like prey to an aggressive co-worker or make others not take you seriously. Begin doing exercises to lower the pitch of your voice. Try singing, but do it an octave lower on all your favorite songs. Practice this and, after a period of time, your voice will begin to lower.
- ii. **Animate your voice.** Avoid a monotone and use dynamics. Your pitch should raise and lower periodically. Radio DJ's are usually a good example of this.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

To create dynamic relationships, whether personal or professional, you must first understand the importance of clear communication and build skills in this area.

Steps

1. Listen: respect others' right to complete their thoughts before you interrupt to say what you want to say.
2. Take notes while listening so as not to lose track of your thoughts.
3. Opinions are valuable; however, know the difference between thinking you know something and actually knowing it. And remember that an opinion doesn't equal a fact.
4. Understand the importance of recognizing that just because you think you know what you're talking about doesn't necessarily make it so, and if you recognize your point of view is flawed, apologize and let the conversation continue. Being right is never as important as recognizing when we're wrong; learn and grow, to argue a weak flawed observation only hinders any chance of orchestrating a meaningful conversation. Suck it up - it's ok to be wrong.
5. Recognize others' contributions and points of view by nodding and verbalizing that you've heard them and can see their point. Be specific when offering constructive criticism by giving examples that make sense.
6. Stay focused; unless we narrow the parameters of a subject, our points are seldom recognized and appreciated as required elements of a broader understanding of the subject matter.
7. Always thank each participant in a group for their contributions, be they right or wrong, and your group will flourish and grow.
8. Be a leader and [exercise](#) humility, because too much strength and dominance leads to weakness.
9. Keep the conversation on track; it's okay to let people ramble a little, but unless we stay on topic, the chances of resolving or tying up a group conversation are minimized.

There are four basic communication tools:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

All four of these basic tools can be learned and improved. First, you must want to improve your communication skills. Next, you must understand them, and recognize their importance in the communication process. Then, you need to learn some new skills. Finally, you must practice good skills to become a better, more effective communicator. At an early age we begin to learn to speak, early enough that it is difficult to remember the process. However, most of us can recall learning to read 2 Cornell Local Roads Program and write. These are skills we learn from parents and teachers. We spend most of our communication time listening. Yet, listening is a skill we are not taught, unlike writing, reading, and speaking. Probably, listening is the most important communication skill we can develop. We will explore listening skills in Chapter 2.

How we get and use information?

How much information we retain in the communication process depends on many factors. It is important for each of us to recognize how we learn best. Do we remember most of what we read? Most of what we hear? Do we learn more if someone shows us?

Typically, we retain information at these rates:

- ❖ 10 percent of what we read
- ❖ 20 percent of what we hear
- ❖ 30 percent of what we see
- ❖ 50 percent of what we see and hear
- ❖ 70 percent of what we see and discuss 90 percent of what we do

Another way to think about how we retain information is this adage:

- ❖ Tell me and I will probably forget,
- ❖ Show me and I might remember,
- ❖ Involve me and I will learn.

It is estimated that we use only about 25 percent of our listening capacity. Here are three tips to help you increase your ability to listen by 50 percent:

- ❖ Look at the speaker (benefit = 15 percent)
- ❖ Ask questions (benefit = 15 percent)
- ❖ Take notes (benefit = 20 percent)

Improvement occurs only if you practice these good listening skills. Try one of them for about three months. It takes at least that long to create a new habit. If you are a good list taker already, then practice asking questions to clarify what you hear. Avoid trying to implement all three tips at the same time. Success with one new habit will encourage you to try others.

Hearing is natural. Listening is a skill that we learn. Remember: we listen more than any other human activity except breathing!

Space

In order to communicate effectively with people, whether in our own culture or in others less familiar, we need to understand accepted boundaries. The use of space between people who are communicating has been studied extensively. Here is a brief description of how we use space in the communication process:

Public space ranges from 12 to 25 feet and is the distance maintained between the audience and a speaker, such as the President and reporters at a press conference, or a professor and students in a classroom.

Social space ranges from 4 to 12 feet and is used for communication among business associates, as well as to separate strangers using public areas such as beaches and bus stops.

Personal space ranges from 2 to 4 feet and is used among friends and family members, and to separate people waiting in lines at teller machines or fast food vendors for example.

Intimate space ranges out to one foot and involves a high probability of touching, as in whispering and embracing. We reserve intimate space for parents, our children, spouses, and close friends.

Use of public, social, personal, and intimate space is interesting to observe in all cultures.

Good communication in your small business is important for your employees' morale and productivity. Here are five steps to improving employee communication.

Communications in the workplace can be mind numbing... or it can mean everything. Of course the water cooler fodder can be the mind numbing part – as can be the overly comfortable and overly friendly employee who has a tendency to stop in your office several times a day to just sit down and chat. They're good workers, so you're not about to fire them, but they stop in at the most inopportune times bringing your current productivity level to a halt.

We've talked about the negatives... now let's consider the positives. Good communication among the small business staff can lead to a more cohesive and cooperative work environment. Employees who are "in the loop" feel more ownership, feel like they know what's going on, are more likely to know what's expected of them on a daily basis, and will feel more comfortable coming to you early with any issues they may be concerned about. So how do we nurture this type of environment? How do we make our SMB one with a nice flow of ongoing communication where people feel comfortable sharing relevant information and know what they should be doing at any given moment?

Following these five steps will likely help to nurture cohesive and cooperative work environment.

1 – Hold weekly "team" meetings

Frequent communication is important. Just as I hold weekly internal team meetings as a project manager, individuals leading small businesses should be having internal "team" meetings with their employees. This will keep everyone in the loop as to what's going on, what the latest promotions are, any issues or concerns that are outstanding, and it gives everyone a chance to talk and ask questions.

2 – Send out a weekly communication via email

Just like the first item above on holding weekly team meetings, at least one general weekly, and more formal, email communication should probably be sent out. This can serve as a follow-up to the weekly employee meeting and act as a sort of "status report."

3 – Have monthly one on one's with each employee

This is something I wish my managers had done with me and something I always try to do for my direct employees. Monthly one on ones means you're never out of touch and your employees never feel you're unapproachable. I realize in an SMB that unapproachable feeling is not as likely to happen as it is in a larger corporation, but it still can happen. Don't take for granted that everyone is happy and feels comfortable.

4 – Let your employees engage your most important customers

As the leader, you want to have your hands in everything. But it's ok to pass leadership on to your employees when you know they're ready and can represent your company well. So when you have a call or meeting or event with a top customer, look for a chance to let an employee periodically lead that or play a significant role. The employee's confidence rises, they gain more of an ownership feeling of the situation, and you get to offload some responsibilities. Win Win.

5 – Have a group "outing" every quarter

This can be a difficult one to pull off on a regular basis and budget limitations may be another factor, but if you can schedule some type of outing or gathering every quarter, you'll help build a more cohesive team. even if it's just a potluck at an employee's house. Doing something together away from work is always a good way to build better employee relations and keep communication going strong.

List of Communication Tools

1. Phones

- The days when people used landlines as their primary communication tool are over. Back then, cell phones were thought of as a luxury. Now, wireless phones are a dominant form of communication in many countries. Text messaging is rampant, and the advent of the smart phone has enabled mobile phones to have PC functionality as well as the functionality to send large pictures and video files. The use of a hand-held device is nearly antiquated, as Bluetooth devices allow users to speak hands-free.

2. Email

- Email is a function of the Internet, and users can access it from myriad devices, including cell phones; PDAs; and, of course, computers. Email is virtually instant, much like all modern communication modes.

3. Social Networks

- Twitter is in essence a form of mass communication, as messages get spread to many recipients. Twitter is a social medium in that it enables instant interaction among users, who can communicate directly and "retweet" other Twitterer messages. Face book is a social media platform similar to its predecessor MySpace. Face book has numerous functions and benefits and allows users to communicate on a one-on-one basis or to large groups. Picture uploads are a prominent feature of Face book and allow for digital record keeping, for free. As of 2011, Face book has more than 600 million users.

4. Instant Messaging and Skype

- Instant messaging is still prevalent, however, as Yahoo, America Online and MSN have successful services. Instant messaging is done most often on keyboards over the Internet. Skype offers online calling, messaging and video calling all across the world via the Internet. Skype is a hybrid free-paid service and charges for its calling and video calling services.

1.1.2 Methods of gain extra information

Information is valuable because it can affect [behavior](#), a [decision](#), or an outcome. For example, if a [manager](#) is told his/her [company's net profit](#) decreased in the past [month](#), he/she may use this information as a reason to cut [financial](#) spending for the next month. A piece of information is considered valueless if, after [receiving](#) it, things remain unchanged. For a [technical](#) definition of information see [information theory](#).

Information is [Data](#) that is

1. [Accurate](#) and timely,
2. Specific and [organized](#) for a purpose,
3. Presented within a [context](#) that gives it meaning and relevance, and
4. can [lead](#) to an increase in understanding and decrease in [uncertainty](#).

The important method to gain extra in formations is **Questions**

- **Questioning techniques**

Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communications and information exchange. By using the right questions in a particular situation, you can improve a whole range of communications skills: for example, you can gather better information and learn more; you can build stronger relationships, manage people more effectively and help others to learn too. So here are some common questioning techniques, and when (and when not) to use them:

1. Closed Questions

A **closed question** usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. For example, "Are you thirsty?" The answer is "Yes" or "No"; "Where do you live?" The answer is generally the name of your town or your address.

Closed questions are good for:

- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"
- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"
- Frame setting: "Are you happy with the service from your bank?"

A misplaced closed question, on the other hand, can kill the conversation and lead to awkward silences, so are best avoided when a conversation is in full flow

2. **Open questions** elicit longer answers. They usually begin with what, why, how. An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings. "Tell me" and "describe" can also be used in the same way as open questions. Here are some examples:

- What happened at the meeting?
- Why did he react that way?
- How was the party?
- Tell me what happened next.
- Describe the circumstances in more detail.

Open questions are good for:

- Developing an open conversation: "What did you get up to on vacation?"
- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"
- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

3. Funnel Questions

This technique involves starting with general questions, and then homing in on a point in each answer, and asking more and more detail at each level. It's often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:

"How many people were involved in the fight?"

"About ten."

"Were they kids or adults?"

"Mostly kids."

""Can you remember if there was a logo on any of the caps?"

"Now you come to mention it, yes, I remember seeing a big letter N."

Using this technique, the detective has helped the witness re-live the scene and gradually focus on a useful detail.

Tip:

When using funnel questioning, start with closed questions. As you progress through the tunnel, start using more open questions.

Funnel questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail about a specific point: "Tell me more about Option 2."
- Gaining the interest or increasing the confidence of the person you're speaking with: "Have you used the IT Helpdesk?", "Did they solve your problem?", "What was the attitude of the person who took your call?"

4. Probing Questions

Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail. Sometimes it's as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement they have made. At other times, you need additional information for clarification, "When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I

give you my final version?", or to investigate whether there is proof for what has been said, "How do you know that the new database can't be used by the sales force?" An effective way of probing is to use the 5 Whys method, which can help you quickly get to the root of a problem.

Tip:

Use questions that include the word "exactly" to probe further: "What exactly do you mean by fast-track?", "Who, exactly, wanted this report?"

Probing questions are good for:

- Gaining clarification to ensure you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly; and
- Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something.

5. Leading Questions

Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. They can do this in several ways:

- With an assumption: "How late do you think that the project will deliver?". This assumes that the project will certainly not be completed on time.
- By adding a personal appeal to agree at the end: "Lori's very efficient, don't you think?" or "Option 2 is better, isn't it?"
- Phrasing the question so that the "easiest" response is "yes" (our natural tendency to prefer to say "yes" than "no" plays an important part in the phrasing of referendum questions): "Shall we all approve Option 2?" is more likely to get a positive response than "Do you want to approve option 2 or not?". A good way of doing this is to make it personal. For example, "Would you like me to go ahead with Option 2?" rather than "Shall I choose Option 2?".
- Giving people a choice between two options, both of which you would be happy with, rather than the choice of one option or not doing anything at all. Strictly speaking, the choice of "neither" is still available when you ask "Which would you prefer of A or B", but most people will be caught up in deciding between your two preferences.

Note that leading questions tend to be closed.

Leading questions are good for:

- Getting the answer you want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice.
- Closing a sale: "If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree a price?"

Tip:

Use leading questions with care. If you use them in a self-serving way or one that harms the interests of the other person, then they can, quite rightly, be seen as manipulative and dishonest.

6. Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions aren't really questions at all, in that they don't expect an answer. They're really just statements phrased in question form: "Isn't John's design work so creative?"

People use rhetorical questions because they are engaging for the listener – as they are drawn into agreeing ("Yes it is and I like working with such a creative colleague") – rather than feeling that they are being "told" something like "John is a very creative designer". (To which they may answer "So What?")

Tip:

Rhetorical questions are even more powerful if you use a string of them. "Isn't that a great display? Don't you love the way the text picks up the colors in the photographs? Doesn't it use space really well? Wouldn't you love to have a display like that for our products?"

Rhetorical questions are good for:

- Engaging the listener

Using Questioning Techniques

You have probably used all of these questioning techniques before in your everyday life, at work and at home. But by consciously applying the appropriate kind of questioning, you can gain the information, response or outcome that you want even more effectively.

Questions are a powerful way of:

- **Learning:** Ask open and closed questions, and use probing questioning.
- **Relationship building:** People generally respond positively if you ask about what they do or enquire about their opinions. If you do this in an affirmative way "Tell me what you like best about working here", you will help to build and maintain an open dialogue.
- **Managing and coaching:** Here, rhetorical and leading questions are useful too. They can help get people to reflect and to commit to courses of action that you've suggested: "Wouldn't it be great to gain some further qualifications?"
- **Avoiding misunderstandings:** Use probing questions to seek clarification, particularly when the consequences are significant. And to make sure you avoid jumping to conclusions, the The Ladder of Inference tool can help too.
- **De-fusing a heated situation:** You can calm an angry customer or colleague by using funnel questions to get them to go into more detail about their grievance. This will not only distract them from their emotions, but will often help you to identify a small practical thing that you can do, which is often enough to make them feel that they have "won" something, and no longer need to be angry.
- **Persuading people:** No one likes to be lectured, but asking a series of open questions will help others to embrace the reasons behind your point of view. "What do you think about bringing the sales force in for half a day to have their laptops upgraded?"

1.1.3 Correct sources of information

An **information source** is a source of information for somebody, i.e. anything that might inform a person about something or provide knowledge to somebody. Information sources may be observations, people, speeches, documents, pictures, organizations etc. They may be primary sources, secondary sources, and tertiary sources and so on. Information can come from virtually anywhere — media, blogs, personal experiences, books, journal and magazine articles, expert opinions, encyclopedias, and web

pages — and the type of information you need will change depending on the question you are trying to answer.

Types of Information Sources

Information can be obtained through various means. A source that provides any kind of information is called an information source.

1. Primary Information Sources

The primary information sources are those that contain the primary information that is the first hand information. For example if you take a statistical data directly from the person who has obtained the data then it would be from the primary source.

Similarly a teacher can also be called a primary source of information, though he may have learned from the secondary source but since you get the information directly from the teacher he/she serves as the primary source.

2. Secondary Information Sources

Secondary information sources are those sources which are the analysis or are based on the primary information.

Most of the information sources that we use for a research are mostly secondary, for example a text book containing various laws of physics that were made by different scientists is a secondary source containing information that was primary to the scientists that made the law.

News papers are also a secondary source as they contain the information that was collected by some one else.

Some of the commonly used secondary information sources are:

- Books, which includes text books, autobiographies, etc
- Periodicals
- Electronic sources

3. Tertiary Sources

These consist of information, which is a distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources. Twice removed from the original, they include encyclopedias, fact books and almanacs, guides and handbooks. Some secondary sources such as indexing and abstracting tools can also be considered tertiary sources.

Workers may be required to contribute to the collection, recording and reporting of a wide range of workplace information. To do this effectively they need to be able to:

- i. **Correctly identify sources of information.**
- ii. **Obtain appropriate information.**
- iii. **Record information on standard forms.**
- iv. **Use correct procedures for the storage of information.**

1.1.4 information selection and organization

Selection of information

The stated objectives are the basis for selecting information for each strategy. Some objectives may relate more specifically to a single presentation. Other objectives may relate to several or most presentations.

In the case of the slide-tape presentation the main objective is to give information. Therefore, the knowledge-need objective for agriculture (Page 2) is a guideline for selecting the information that should be included in the slide-tape.

In a classroom situation, for instance, a unit on water is to be taught. A part of this unit deals with the water cycle. One of the stated objectives is: **In a test situation, students should be able to draw a diagram of the water cycle that shows the major elements and the relationship of each to the other.**

A flip chart is selected as the presentation strategy. The objective requires that this flip chart include the names of the major elements (evaporation, condensation, and precipitation) and that it show the relationship between the major elements. How to organize the information in the flip chart is the next step. Similarly, this is the next step in planning the slide-tape about fertilizers.

Organization of information

Flip charts, leaflets, slides with taped narrations, filmstrips, motion pictures, radio broadcasts, and telecasts are linear; that is, information presented to the audience follows a sequential order from beginning to end as arranged by the producer.

After the information to be presented has been collected, the first step in organization is to prepare a **content outline**. An outline requires arrangement of the information in a systematic order. It enables a quick check for extraneous material or omissions of essential information, and for the evaluation of the information included against the stated objectives.

After preparing a content outline, the information needs to be organized in a more detailed fashion which is a **treatment**. The treatment for a flip chart or a leaflet is a rough sketch of the final layout which shows the location of the visual and verbal

elements. This rough sketch serves as a script. The producer proceeds from the treatment to the finished product.

For slide-tapes, filmstrips, motion pictures, and telecasts, the **treatment** is a narrative account that indicates how the content information is to be arranged and what part of the message will be carried by visual and what part by verbal elements.

What form will the presentation of the content take? Will it be a straightforward explanation? Will it be in a story form? The treatment for the fertilizer slide-tape could be a story about Farmer A and his success in using fertilizer; or the story might contrast Farmer A who uses fertilizer with Farmer B who does not. An example of a **treatment** for the slide-tape is given in Appendix 1.

The final step in organizing information for slide-tapes, filmstrips, etc. is the preparation of a **script**. Scripts are usually in two columns - one column a verbal description of the scene, the other the accompanying narration. When a sketch of the verbal scene description is added, the script may be referred to as a **storyboard-script**. A script or storyboard-script serves as a blueprint for the photographer or artist. A portion of a **storyboard-script** is given in Appendix 1.

In summary, planning is an interrelated step-by-step process.

Statement of objectives. WHAT is to be accomplished as related to identified audience needs? The objectives should be stated to indicate what audience need is to be fulfilled.

Presentation strategy. HOW objectives will be accomplished. The **How** should take into account audience characteristics and available media resources.

Selection of information - CONTENT of each presentation. What is selected must be based on the stated objectives and checked against them.

Organization of Information - SEQUENCE of the content from a simple outline to the detailed script. This is the last step before production. Like previous steps, the script should be checked against the stated objectives.

The four criteria for selection of information sources are:

- (1) **Accessibility** - accessibility of information channels (v/without giving consideration to the reliability or quality of the information expected)
- (2) **Ease of Use** - ease of use of the information channels listed.

(3) **Technical Quality** - technical quality or reliability of the information obtainable from each of the channels listed (without giving consideration to the accessibility of the channel).

1.1.5 Under take verbal and written report

Most verbal reports are short, simple and often given as progress reports on the day-to-day running of an organisation.

Sometimes, however, you may need to give a longer verbal report. For instance, to back-up a long written report and to answer questions about it. In such cases you will usually be expected to give a summary of your report to an audience which has already seen the written version.

It's not usual to present a long, complicated report by verbal means alone. There should always be a written version. This ensures there is a permanent record of the report available. This is necessary, because people often remember only a small amount of what they hear. Without the written version much important information would be missed by the audience.

If you ever have to give a long verbal report - either on its own or to back-up a written one - this is what you should do.

The more preparation you make the more confident you will be. Make sure you know your subject as thoroughly as possible. Where there is also a written report, read this several times to make sure you have not forgotten anything since you wrote it.

Make outline notes of everything you want to say and put them into a logical order.

Do not overload your presentation with detail and facts. These are already in the written report and can be referred to. However, you must give enough detail for your verbal report to be understood and your conclusions accepted. Always remember that people cannot remember lots of detail, such as lists of figures, when given verbally.

Start your presentation with a brief outline of the subject of the report. Quickly mention what is in the main body of the report. Indicate any special features and then emphasize the conclusions and recommendations.

The length of your report will vary according to the circumstances, but try to keep it as short as you can, while still including all the necessary information.

People become bored quickly; so diagrams, graphs and illustrations all help to maintain interest. Use these as much as you can - they will help to make your presentation more interesting. These days people expect you to use slides or a Power Point presentation to make your delivery more interesting and memorable.

Your presentation must always be accurate. Facts, statistics and so on must be correct. This point applies to all reports and is very important.

Finally, try to think of any questions that may be asked and prepare answers. If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, say so, and offer to try to find the answer later. This is far better than trying to muddle through. Besides misleading your audience you could make yourself look very foolish.

Now to some advice about how to speak when presenting your report. Try to speak in a firm, clear voice. Do not mumble with your head buried deep in your notes. Obviously, you have to look at your notes but also look regularly at your audience. This will help your voice to carry better, especially to those at the back of the room.

Do not speak too quickly. Speak slowly and deliberately. Your pronunciation will be much easier to understand. The ideal pace to speak is a little slower than normal conversation speed.

Finally, to improve your speaking technique you must practise. A good way to do this is to read aloud in front of a mirror for a few minutes each day. Your reflection in the mirror is like your audience, and you should glance at it frequently. As you read aloud, deliberately slow down your speed. You will always find that the professional speakers on TV and radio set an excellent example for you to follow. Listen to them carefully and it will be a great help to you.

This advice about how to speak applies, of course, when you are addressing any gathering no matter whether it is a social occasion, a group of workers or some other meeting.

Simply follow our guidance - plan properly, speak firmly but clearly and above all, have confidence in yourself. If you do all these things you should find you are speaking to an attentive and interested group of people

1.1.6 Communication skills maintenance

The long-term effectiveness of a communication skills course was tested in a controlled study of two matched groups of social work students. The program group participated in a 50-hour communication skills training course in addition to ordinary concept training, while the control group participated in social work concept training only. In the follow-up period, the groups engaged in similar field practice. Both groups were assessed with regard to level of communicated empathy before and after the three-month training, as well as at 18-month follow-up. At the end of the training period, the program group showed a significant increase in the level of communicated empathy, while the control group did not. The program group not only maintained, but slowly increased, its level of communicated empathy. The control group also showed a small increase after the training period, but the difference between the groups was maintained. The interaction of specific communication training and field practice after training in the process of acquiring and maintaining increased levels of communicated empathy is discussed.

Establishing rapport

How do you go about Establishing Rapport?

- You need Self-Confidence
- You must Understand People
- You must be Enthusiastic
- You must make Eye Contact
- You must be Interested in them

Communication is a Series of Experience

LO2 Lead workplace discussion (12HRS)

2.1 Response to workplace issues

2.1.1 Observation and provision of immediate response to workplace issues

Immediate Response to work place issues

1. Critical Incident Response

The most crucial aspect of critical incident response is getting rapid support for your incident that is triaged and managed by professionally trained employees of your provider to assist your workforce and employees to overcome and minimize risk from incidents, both individually and organizationally that can develop into potentially damaging effects (i.e. post traumatic stress disorder).

2. Workplace Training and Team Interventions

develop and deliver the right training or team interventions for your business. Instead of providing ad hoc “off the shelf” based training packages that rarely meet each organization’s unique needs, we tailor all training. We deploy a trained professional who is experienced at working with you to identify your specific needs to create a targeted solution for your business. We also offer ongoing support of these programs so that the skills that are learnt aren’t then lost over time.

3. Manager Support Hotline

Managers today are faced with more complex situations and demands, together with numerous employee issues that impact performance. Contemporary life and work demand that managers know and understand how to deal with complex people issues.

4. Return to Work Case Management

provide a return to work case management service that helps reduce the ongoing costs of lost work time for employees. We work to reduce the impact of lost time and or recruitment in your workplace with high quality return to work counsellors registered with Work cover.

5. Mediations and Workplace Investigations

Organisations that manage conflict well have stronger cultures and better communication. Leaders that deal with conflict effectively are more respected and report better work results. When conflict is present in the workplace it needs to be resolved quickly and efficiently. Our mediation service is set up specifically for this as we recognise how important it is. Our mediators are trained experts who will help to get your employees back to normal operation, where possible, as quickly as possible.

6. Executive Coaching Programs

We understand the challenges facing executives in today’s face paced, complex working environments. We offer programs that are tailor made to the organisation and executive groups as we are aware of the varying skill sets found in executives and

senior leaders. These programs will unlock each executive's natural strengths, leadership ability, courage and resourcefulness. Executives or those preparing to advance, often receive limited coaching and/or mentoring from external professionals to assist and ready them with various roles and skills that will be required.

7. Redundancy Support/Vocational Counseling/Outplacement

Redundancies are common place in today's business environment and affect not only the person who is made redundant but also the organisation's culture and the employees who stay.

Responses to workplace issues are sought Response to workplace issues are provided when sought.

2.1.2 Constructive contributions to workplace

Constructive contributions are made to workplace discussion on such issues as production, quality and safety

CONTENTS:

- Method/techniques of discussion

To keep discussion focused, you might initially pose several key questions. The larger the group, the more likely that some participants will dominate and others remain silent. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak, you may want to divide participants into smaller units. When any discussion concludes, summarize the main points orally and in writing.

1. Small Groups: Size will depend on time and the sensitivity or complexity of the subject. In most cases each group selects a reporter to summarize its discussion.

2. Buzz Groups: Participants discuss in pairs for a limited period. This method is especially effective for articulating ideas in preparation for a general discussion or to give expression to personal response to a film, presentation, or experience. After talking in pairs, couples might be asked to combine in groups of four and compare their opinions.

3. Open Questioning: Facilitators need to develop the skills of keeping the goal of discussion clearly in mind and of asking questions that encourage participation and analysis. Here are some typical forms of open questions:

4. Rules for Discussion: One way to help create an environment of trust and mutual respect is to have participants develop "Rules for Discussion":

a) Ask participants to think of some principles for discussion, which they think everyone should follow.

b) Write all of these suggestions where everyone can see them, combining and simplifying where necessary. If not already mentioned, you might want to suggest some of the following principles:

- Listen to the person who is speaking;
- Only one person speaks at a time;
- Raise your hand to be recognized if you want to say something;
- Don't interrupt when someone is speaking;
- When you disagree with someone, make sure that you make a difference between criticizing someone's idea and criticizing the person;
- Don't laugh when someone is speaking (unless she or he makes a joke!);
- Encourage everyone to participate.

c) Copy the list of rules neatly and hang it where participants can refer, add, or make changes to it as necessary.

5. Talk Around / Go Around: The facilitator sets a topic or asks a question and everyone takes turns responding, usually within a set time. Limit the time consistently. Make clear that anyone who doesn't wish to speak may pass.

6. Talking Circle / Word Wheels: Participants are divided in two groups, one sitting in a circle facing outward and the other facing inward so that each person faces someone else. These pairs then exchange views on an announced topic. After a set period, the facilitator asks everyone on the inside to move one seat to the right and discuss with the new person sitting opposite. This process continues until each person has changed views with several others.

7. Talking Stick: In this method, derived from Native American tradition, anyone who speaks must be holding a designated object, which could literally be a stick or anything else easily visible and portable. This method builds awareness of sharing the "air time."

8. Talking Tickets: To provide everyone an equal opportunity to speak, give each participant three "talking tickets," each representing a certain amount of "air time." Once someone has used all her or his tickets, that person has no further opportunities to speak.

9. Think-Pair-Share: Participants have time to write or simply think on their own about a critical question; they then link with one other person to discuss and then bring their reflections to the entire group.

10. Write Around: This method is a discussion in written form. Pose a key question and ask everyone to write a response at the top of a page. Each paper is then passed to the person on the right, who reads the first statement and responds to it by writing something below. Repeat the process until three or four people have had a chance to respond. Then pass the papers back to the left so that everyone can see what has been written in this "silent discussion." Because the facilitator does not see what participants write, this method can enable them to express opinions they might wish to keep from the facilitator.

DISCUSSION METHOD

The discussion method is one in which the students and the instructor exchange their ideas in order to get a better understanding of a topic. It can be a whole period or be a part of a lesson. The discussion method, when used properly, is a good way to stimulate thinking on the part of the student. It can be used to advantage when the students have background knowledge of the subject being discussed. The instructor should prompt everyone to take part, thus allowing the students the opportunity to learn from everyone in the group. The discussion method is interaction centered and can be teacher or student centered, and can be held in either a large or small group. Interaction techniques capitalize on the human desire to talk and share one's thoughts. Personal activity permits greater involvement in the lesson.

Advantages and Special Used of the Discussion Method

1. Expands the cognitive and affective domains of students.
2. Can be used to solve problems and develop interest in the topic.
3. Emphasizes main teaching points.
4. Utilizes student knowledge and ideas.
5. Results in more permanent learning because of the high degree of student involvement.
6. Determine student understanding and progress.
7. Everyone has a chance to get involved.
8. Teaches how to come to an agreement within a group without arguing.
9. Permits students are teacher to get acquainted.

Limitations of the Discussion Method

1. *Tend to get off topic if the instructor doesn't continually redirect ideas.*
2. More informed and eager pupils tend to monopolize the discussion.
3. Not suitable for presenting information for the first time.
4. not very effective in describing procedures or breakdown of a component

How to Lead a Discussion

. A group discussion is a planned conversation between three to 10 people on a selected topic, with a trained discussion leader. The purpose is to express opinions and gain information on the topic and learn from the other group participants. Group discussion is an effective way to

- Share ideas and broaden viewpoints
- Stimulate interest in problems

- Help participants express their ideas
- Identify and explore a problem
- Create an informal atmosphere
- Get opinions from persons who hesitate to speak

Preparing for a Discussion

Preparation is important to the success of any event. A discussion is no different. The following things encourage a good discussion to happen:

- The preferred seating arrangement is a circle, semicircle, U, or hollow square. All these formations allow everyone in the group to see one another.
- Make the room as comfortable as possible. Check the ventilation and lighting.
- Have paper and pencil ready to record main points.
- Start and end the discussion on time.
- Encourage informality and good humor. Permit friendly disagreement on the point under discussion, not among personalities.

Guidelines for a Discussion

If you participate in a discussion, the following guidelines will help you contribute effectively to the group:

- ✓ Be an active part of the group.
- ✓ Work to solve common problems.
- ✓ Discuss completely, but do not argue.
- ✓ Contribute ideas related to the subject of the discussion.
- ✓ Ask questions to clarify ideas.
- ✓ Be clear and brief.
- ✓ Listen and learn.
- ✓ Write down good ideas.

Leading a Discussion

If you lead a group discussion, the following guidelines will help you distinguish your role as the leader versus a participant:

- Help the group feel at ease. See that everyone knows everybody else.
- Give everyone a chance to talk. Let the person talking remain seated. More people will participate, and those talking will feel more at ease.
- Don't allow anyone to monopolize the discussion. Interrupt the "speech maker" tactfully, and lead the discussion to another person.
- Call on individuals who seem ready to talk rather than going around the circle.
- Direct rather than dominate the discussion by easing yourself into the background when the group gets into the swing of it.
- Be sure the discussion is of interest to all the participants.
- Keep the discussion on track. If it gets sidetracked, bring it back to the main subject by suggesting more important points that need to be covered in the time allotted.
- If you feel that some important point is being neglected, mention it.
- Summarize periodically. Stop occasionally to review the points that have been made.

- Stick to the time limit. If there isn't time to cover the subject sufficiently, mention this in your evaluation, and take action to correct this before the next group discussion.
- Keep spirits high. Encourage ease and informality. Let everyone have a good time. Don't let the discussion drag or become boring.
- Quickly summarize the conclusions in such a way that everyone will realize the important facts brought out in the discussion.

2.1.3 Goals/objectives and action plan in the workplace & communication

Goals and aims of actions under taken in the workplace are communicated.

Developing goals, objectives, strategies and activities for your workplace health and wellbeing program helps to create a clear action plan.

Goals identify the overarching aims of the program. Goals are broad statements for achieving your organization's priorities and will guide the action plan to ensure that the desired end point is met.

Objectives are the steps towards achieving the goals—they help break down the goal into processes that are achievable and measurable.

Strategies are the detailed ways of reaching each of the objectives—these need to be realistic and achievable. You may have one or several strategies for each objective.

Activities are the actions that need to happen for each of the identified strategies. These are all the day-to-day tasks of the program.

Your workplace health and wellbeing program should aim to include a mix of strategies targeting people, places and policies. Your program also needs to include a range of strategies and activities for communicating and promoting the program to employees.

Each activity will also require the identification of *resources and support, responsible employee(s)* who are to carry the activity through, a *time line* and an indication of how you can *measure your success*.

Action plan

Action plan is a sequence of steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to succeed.

An action plan has **three** major elements

- (1) Specific tasks: what will be done and by whom.
- (2) Time horizon: when will it be done?
- (3) Resource allocation: what specific funds are available for specific activities? Also called action program

What are the criteria for a good action plan?

The action plan for your initiative should meet several criteria. Is the action plan:

- ❖ *Complete?* Does it list all the action steps or changes to be sought in all relevant parts of the community (e.g., schools, business, government, faith community)?
- ❖ *Clear?* Is it apparent who will do what by when?
- ❖ *Current?* Does the action plan reflect the current work? Does it anticipate newly emerging opportunities and barriers?

LO3 Identify and communicate issues arising in the workplace (8HRS)

3.1 Identification of issues and problems

Identify and Fix Safety Issues

Find the Hazards

The first thing you need to do is to find the hazards in your workplace – that is, find anything with the potential to cause harm. Some hazards will be obvious because they'll be common to your industry, but others won't be.

- Start by talking. It's a legal requirement that safety is discussed in workplaces, and it's also smart management.
- Find out more about getting the conversation started with workplace [consultation](#).
- Working closely with your employees, take a look around your workplace using this [self assessment tool](#) to identify safety issues. Write those you find down – on your [Safety Action Plan](#).
- Go through any injury records you have. They might show you if problem areas exist, or if any patterns are emerging. If you don't currently keep a written record of workplace injuries – and near misses – start now.
- Take a look at what inspectors check for – view the [safer work zones](#).

Now after you've made your list of possible hazards, you need to assess the risk – that is, make a judgment about the seriousness of each hazard, and decide which hazard requires the most urgent attention.

Fix the Problems

When you've prioritised the hazards on your list, you need to start immediately on the most important step of all – fixing the problems in consultation with your workers.

- Your first aim should be to totally remove the risk. For example, if the risk involves a hazardous chemical, try to find a safe alternative to the chemical. If there is a slipping or tripping hazard in your workplace, see if it can be removed. If a task is intrinsically dangerous, look for alternative ways to complete the task.
- If it's not possible to totally remove a risk, you need to find ways to control it. You might have to alter the way certain jobs are done, change work procedures, or perhaps provide protective equipment.
- Where you are unsure of the risks in a task use the [job safety assessment tool](#) to consider the safety issues in each step.

You'll often find there are simple solutions to many of the hazards in your workplace. Most of them will be inexpensive, and some will cost nothing at all. Of course, sometimes there are no straightforward solutions. What do you do then?

- utilise our [free safety consultation session](#)
- check our alerts and guidance notes for [your industry](#) or a particular [health and safety topic](#) and see if there's a documented solution to the problem
- contact the [Work Safe Advisory Service](#)
- talk to other people in your industry to see how they've handled similar problems
- when introducing changes you may need to consider the training of your workers
- Finally review any changes to ensure other safety issues have not arisen.

3.1.1 Dialogue initiation with appropriate staff/personnel

Dialogue is the manner in which we take in another's viewpoint, listen and respond to one another, and engage. The Head Start community can learn from this article how Martin Buber first described dialogue, the skill it requires, the role it plays in our day-to-day interactions, and how we can test ourselves to see if we are ready for dialogue. In addition, the article includes a list of strategies for successful dialogue.

Strategies for Successful Dialogue

The following is a checklist of strategies for successful dialogue.

1. Check for the presence of all three core requirements of dialogue - equality, empathy, and openness - and learn how to introduce missing ones. This is the bedrock strategy; without it you do not have dialogue.
2. Focus on common interests, not the divisive ones.
3. Keep dialogue and decision-making separate and compartmentalized.
4. Clarify assumptions that lead to subculture distortions.
5. Offer your own assumptions before speculating on those of others.
6. Use specific cases to raise general issues.
7. Focus on conflicts between value systems, not persons.
8. When appropriate, express the emotions that accompany strongly held values.
9. Initiate dialogue through an act of empathy.
10. Be sure trust exists before addressing transference distortions.
11. Where applicable, identify mistrust as the real source of misunderstandings.
12. Err on the side of including people who disagree.
13. Encourage relationships in order to humanize transactions.
14. Expose old scripts to a reality check.
15. Minimize the level of mistrust before pursuing practical objectives.

3.1.2 Communication problems and issues

Communication problems in the workplace can cost your company productivity and money. Without efficient communication, your company is unable to exchange information essential to daily operations and create a communication network to carry new product data. Understanding examples of workplace communication issues can help you to create policies that will address problems and create an efficient communication network in the office.

Examples of Communication Problems in the Workplace

Language Barriers

A diverse workplace has several benefits to a business, such as a variety of solutions to company issues and insight into international markets during expansion. But the language barrier that can sometimes occur in a diverse workplace, or any workplace, may become a communication problem. There might be language barriers between people of different ethnic backgrounds, people of different ages and people with different levels of industry experience. Any language barrier is going to slow communication or create misunderstandings that make communication ineffective.

Personal Issues

Effective communication in a workplace is based on professional correspondence designed to assist in the daily operation of the company or the continued growth of the organization. When employees allow personal issues to affect company communication, a communication problem develops that could take a long time to track down and resolve. People who refuse to communicate based on a personal disagreement are damaging the company's ability to do business and slowing the growth of the organization.

Lack of Feedback

One-way communication can become an ineffective way to exchange information throughout the company. Employees and managerial staff should provide feedback at all times to improve the quality of information disseminated and the manner in which the information is delivered. For example, if a department tends to send out information in a format confusing to other people in the company, then that department needs to be informed of its communication problems immediately or else the information coming from that group will always pose a communication challenge.

Importance of Effective Communication at the Workplace

Effective communication in the workplace increases productivity.

Any workplace thrives with effective communication. Effective communication empowers employees and provides clear direction and feedback agents for employees to express their thoughts, suggestions and concerns. The Wisconsin Business Alumni website states that all business involves people and people need communication to stay informed and satisfied. It also states that communication is one of the most important aspects of management.

1. Definition

- Effective communication is the process of accurately forming a message, sending it and it being completely understood by the recipients. Effective communication requires that verbal (spoken words) and nonverbal (body language, gestures and actions) agree with one another. For example, if a manager verbally says he is interested in the employees' suggestions but never creates a way or opportunity for employees to express their thoughts, the messages will contradict each other. This leads to confusion and frustration.

Function

- The purpose of effective communication in the workplace is to provide clear objectives, tools to accomplish those objectives and an action plan to follow. Providing clear direction increases employee satisfaction, which has a direct impact on customer satisfaction, according to morebusiness.com. It also creates a strong corporate culture where employees trust leadership and feel like they have a voice, according to Alliance Training and Consulting. For example, if leadership effectively communicates with employees certain goals and expectations, the employees will be able to accomplish the goals with a sense of completion. Effective communication in the workplace provides purpose and reward when the purpose is fulfilled.
- Effective communication in the workplace can manifest itself in different ways. Written communication such as memos, the company intranet and emails are traditional types of communication in the workplace. Feedback agents such as focus groups, employee surveys and discussion groups encourage employees to share their viewpoints with upper management. Meetings are held to verbally communicate vision, direction and important information specific to the company.

Type of Workplace Communication

- Internal workplace communication is all messages sent within the company. According to Lee Hopkins, a leading Australian communication consultant, "internal communication is the conversations that businesses have with their staff and those staff has with each other." This may be between two employees; management and a team of employees; or the company as a whole and all employees. External workplace communication is messages sent to people outside the company such as business-to-business communication, marketing efforts and public relations.

Considerations

- Effective communication in the workplace is a work in progress. Every company and business always has room for improvement with its communication. A communication specialist can perform an assessment and provide an objective look at how effective the company's communication is.

Corporate communication should be sent through various media to send one message various ways, according to morebusiness.com. This will ensure everyone understands the message and the message is constantly reinforced.