



FEDRAL TVET AGENCY

Ethiopian TVET-System

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICE Level II

LEARNING GUIDE # 4

Unit of Competence: -	Participate in workplace communication
Module Title: -	Participating in workplace communication
LG Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 M03 1019 LO1-LG14</u>
TTLM Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 TTLM 1019 V1</u>

LO 1: Obtain and Convey Workplace Communication



INTRODUCTION	Learning Guide #4
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This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics –

- Communication Techniques
- Communication Difficulties

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this Learning Guide, you will be able to –

- Access specific and relevant information from *appropriate sources*
- Use effective questioning , active listening and speaking skills to gather and convey information
- Use appropriate *medium* to transfer information and ideas
- Use appropriate non- verbal communication
- Identify and follow appropriate lines of communication with supervisors and colleagues
- Use defined workplace procedures for the location and *storage* of information
- Carry out personal interaction clearly and concisely

Learning Activities

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets 1” in pages 3-6.
3. Accomplish the “Self-check” in pages 7.
4. If you earned a satisfactory evaluation proceed to “Information Sheet 2 . Read the Information written in the “Information Sheets 2” in pages8-15.
6. Accomplish the “Self-check” in pages 16.
7. Your teacher will evaluate your output either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, Your teacher shall advice you on additional work. But if satisfactory you can proceed to the next

Information Sheet 1	Communication Techniques
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Communication techniques

Communication is the key to success in the workplace. Communication occurs with vendors and customers. There are so many different communication techniques that it can be difficult recognizing them if someone communicates differently than you. Communication

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techniques are often the key to climbing the corporate ladder, so you'll want to master them earlier in your career rather than later. No matter how you communicate,

Listening is one of the most important communication techniques you can master. You might not think it takes much effort to listen, but listening is harder work than you think! Not only does it involve closing your mouth, but you also have to concentrate on what the other person is saying. It's pretty hard to carry on a conversation if you don't listen to what the other person is saying. Another important thing on the long list of communication techniques you need to master is your **nonverbal cues**. Communication experts say 55 percent of the impact from every conversation you have comes from your nonverbal cues. These include eye contact, your posture, and the gestures you make. They can be as simple as crossing your arms or nodding your head. The type of nonverbal cues you give indicates what you think, even if your words say something else entirely.

For example, if you're nodding your head up and down while your wife is telling you about her day, she'll immediately see you as a good listener and a very supportive husband. Nodding indicates a "yes," and we all want to be agreeable to our spouses. On the other hand, if someone you know slightly from work stops you to talk at the mall and you cross your arms for the entire conversation, then you're giving off the vibe that you really don't want to be there. It's also important to watch how touchy-feeling you get with people while you're speaking to them. Some people don't like to be touched, and invading their personal space is one nonverbal cue you can easily avoid. Nonverbal cues are just as important as any other communication techniques you're trying to master.

Of course talking is a vital part of any conversation, and all your communication techniques are worthless if you don't watch the tone of voice you use when you talk. According to communication experts, 38 percent of what you actually mean when you're talking is determined by what tone of voice you're using. Basically, if you say you'll be happy to do something for someone but you're yelling when you say it, the other person will clearly see that you're actually not happy to do it. Tone of voice can easily give our displeasure away at times when we really don't want it to.

Verbal Vs Non-verbal

Verbal Communication: Business professionals demonstrating effective verbal communication skills use spoken words to convey a message clearly and concisely. To get a message across, the sender needs to ensure the receiver correctly interprets the words. If not, confusion and conflict typically results. By successfully delivering a message, business professionals describe ideas, thoughts and directives that allow colleagues to work better together. Effective verbal communication begins by acknowledging what the audience needs. By planning what he wants to say, how he wants to say it and seeking feedback on how the message was received, a business professional ensures successful communication.

Meetings

Verbal communication occurs in meetings when participants share their ideas. Effective meeting organizers clearly define their objective, such as whether the intent of the meeting is to make a decision, brainstorm ideas, approve a plan, communicate a change or get a status report. At the beginning of the meeting, an organizer uses verbal communication to state the priorities of the meeting, the desired outcomes and the amount of time allowed to discuss each topic. By asking for additional input from participants, she ensures the meeting remains relevant for everyone. The meeting organizer also ensures that every participant gets a chance to speak without monopolizing the agenda.

Presentations and Lectures

Using effective verbal communication, business professionals give presentations and lectures to convey their expertise on a particular topic. Whether a business professional provides instruction, describes a product to make a sale or communicates a vision or strategy, he needs to keep the message clear by preparing adequately. Using vivid language, descriptive examples and supplementary visuals, he ensures a successful presentation. By using short words and sentences, speakers tend to avoid confusion. Effective presenters allow time for the audience to ask questions and provide comments.

Workshops

Workshop organizers use verbal communication to direct the activities of participants. By providing clear instructions for group, the facilitator ensures a positive development experience. For example, a leader describes the rules for participating role-playing exercises, talks about the scenario and determines how long the activity takes. Using effective verbal communication, leaders guide participants in researching issues, solving problems, negotiating solutions and making decisions.

Conversations

Conversations typically involve two people discussing a topic. Effective verbal communication occurs during conversations when the speaker acknowledges the sensitivity of the subject, time constraints and types of questions the receiver might ask. If the conversation occurs face to face, successful communicators use active listening skills such as repeating back what the other person has said. They also resist the temptation to interrupt and allow the other person to speak up as well to convey their thoughts. If the conversation occurs by telephone, the participants need to pay even more attention.

Non-verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is critical to the success of any workplace. It starts from the moment an employee applies for a job and continues through the employment of that particular

employee. Realizing the importance of nonverbal communication can promote teamwork, respect and efficiency in any workplace.

Eye Contact

Employees need to give fellow workers the respect they deserve. By looking someone in the eye, the speaker feels as though the message is being carried through to the recipient. Eye contact promotes understanding and honesty. Often times, if someone does not look the other person in the eye, there may be a feeling of insecurity or dishonesty.

Posture

Slouching in the chair signifies a person who may not care about the message being sent. A sloppy posture says that the recipient may not be paying attention or may be purposely trying to distract the speaker. Leaning back in the chair or rocking back and forth shows boredom and a distinct lack of interest in the message. In contrast, sitting up straight and leaning in slightly tells the speaker you are interested in the communication that is occurring.

Office Appearance

Believe it or not, the state of an office also signals communication to co-workers. If a desk is messy and strewn with paperwork, a person glancing at the office may believe the occupant has a cluttered mind and is harried when it comes to work. Saving only the paperwork that will be needed in the future can cut down on the paperwork stack that many people experience. In addition, it is important to remember that only the things that are needed throughout the day need to be on the desktop itself. For example, a stapler, tape dispenser and pencil cup can be permanent fixtures on a desk. Correction fluid, sticky notes and extra notepads can be kept in a draw and pulled out only when needed. An uncluttered, clean desk communicates an organized and neat individual.

Time

Respecting the time of other workers is also a nonverbal form of communication. For those that attend meetings with co-workers, being on time is of utmost importance. Arriving on time shows respect for others' time and contributions. Employees who are continually late for meetings and other appointments with co-workers signal that they may not respect their fellow employees' time or jobs. For example, someone who is continually several minutes late for an 8 a.m. production meeting shows other employees that it is okay to arrive late and that the employee may not believe his or her time is as important as their time.

Nonverbal communication is critical to the success of any workplace. It starts from the moment an employee applies for a job and continues through the employment of that particular

employee. Realizing the importance of nonverbal communication can promote teamwork, respect and efficiency in any workplace

Personal Vs cultural factors

Individual differences

Communication skills are extremely important, because communication---whether it is verbal or nonverbal---permeates almost every area of life. While diversity and differences can weaken and cause issues in some areas of communication, these two components actually help to make individual and group communication skills stronger in other ways. Use certain activities to help a class or team understand and embrace diverse communication styles and skills.

In the Education Setting

Have children discuss the religious and cultural traditions that their families celebrate at home. Create a chart on the blackboard that highlights the various ways in which each background is communicating similar ideas. In a classroom with English as a Second Language students, discuss the importance of body language and nonverbal communication for all students. Have the students play charades or act out a scene from a play without using any words. The other students must guess what the actors are doing.

Manners Host: a seminar or class on manners across various cultures at a local library or school. Have group members brainstorm a list of communication behaviors that they see as appropriate. Once the list is complete, explain (or have students from other cultures explain) which of those behaviors is not appropriate in another culture. People in the United States often communicate directly, for instance, while in Asia, people employ implicitness. Show the group videos of scenarios made awkward or confusing due to lack of understanding of one another's culture.

When an adverse situation arises at work, hold meetings to discuss the issue whenever possible. Have different team members suggest ways in which they would respond to the problems, but also have them explain why they would respond in that manner. Doing so shows the group how people communicate differently. Setup a meeting where the group makes rules for communication, such as being aware of nonverbal gestures that could be offensive to people of other cultures and speaking in clear, concise English at all times.

Online Communication

In a seminar or class on online communication, have students write a simple paragraph about themselves. Assign each student a different type of outlet for which to write. Online forms of communication include e-mail, blogs, wiki posts and instant messages. Have the students engage in an open discussion about the different ways in which they convey similar facts,

depending upon which type of outlet they utilize. Present a lecture where you point out the problems associated with using chat room lingo in professional messages.

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Name: _____

Date: _____

Instruction: Answer all the questions listed below, if you have some clarifications- feel free to ask your teacher.

I. Direction: Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.

- _____ 1. It is the key to success in the workplace.
- _____ 2. It is one of the most important communication techniques you can Master.
- _____ 3. Eye contact, posture, and gestures are examples of what Communication techniques?
- _____ 4. When talking to someone, what do you need to do as a sign of Respect? It is also the way to determine if one person is lying or not.
- _____ 5. It is critical to the success of any workplace.
- _____ 6. It uses spoken words to convey a message clearly and concisely.

II. Enumeration: Enumerate the following:

- **Give the 4 Verbal Communication application at Workplace**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- **Give the 3 Examples of a Non-Verbal Communication**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Information Sheet 2

Communication Difficulties

2.1 Communication difficulties

Misunderstandings and communication problems remain one of the most common sources of workplace strife, and interpersonal difficulties are magnified when conflicting work styles coexist in one setting. Generational differences (baby boomers vs. GenX-ers), personal management styles, educational background, and cultural diversity are all potential sources of office misunderstandings.

While conflict is inevitable, it need not ruin your workday or cause unbearable [stress](#). Try these conflict resolution tips to make your work environment a less stressful, more productive place:

- **Be specific** in formulating your complaints. "I'm never invited to meetings" is not as effective as "I believe I would have been able to contribute some ideas at last Thursday's marketing meeting."
- **Resist the temptation to involve yourself** in conflicts that do not directly involve you or your responsibilities. Even if someone has clearly been wronged, allow him or her to resolve the situation as he/she chooses.
- **Try to depersonalize conflicts.** Instead of a "me versus you" mentality, visualize an "us versus the problem" scenario. This is not only a more professional attitude, but it will also improve productivity and is in the best interests of the company.
- **Be open and listen** to another's point of view and reflect back to the person as to what you think you heard. This important clarification skill leads to less misunderstanding, with the other person feeling heard and understood. Before explaining your own position, try to paraphrase and condense what the other is saying into one or two sentences. Start with, "So you're saying that..." and see how much you really understand about your rival's position. You may find that you're on the same wavelength but having problems communicating your ideas.
- **Don't always involve your superiors** in conflict resolution. You'll quickly make the impression that you are unable to resolve the smallest difficulties.
- If an extended discussion is necessary, **agree first** on a time and place to talk. Confronting a coworker who's with a client or working on a deadline is unfair and unprofessional. Pick a time when you're both free to concentrate on the problem and its resolution. **Take it outside** and away from the group of inquisitive coworkers if they're

not involved in the problem. Don't try to hold negotiations when the office gossip can hear every word.

- **Limit your complaints** to those directly involved in the workplace conflict. Character assassination is unwarranted. Remember, you need to preserve a working relationship rather than a personal one, and your opinion of a coworker's character is generally irrelevant. "He missed last week's deadline" is OK; "he's a total idiot" is not.
- **Know when conflict isn't just conflict.** If conflict arises due to sexual, racial, or ethnic issues, or if someone behaves inappropriately, that's not conflict, it's harassment. Take action and discuss the problem with your supervisor or human resources department.
- **Consider a mediator** if the problem gets out of control, or if the issue is too emotional to resolve in a mutual discussion. At this step, your supervisor should be involved. You can consider using a neutral third party mediator within your own company (human resources if available) or hiring a professional counselor.
- **Take home point: It's not all about you** - You may think it's a personal attack, but maybe your co-worker is just having a bad day. Take time to think BEFORE you speak in response to an insensitive remark. It may be that saying nothing is the best response.

Techniques of interviewing and listening

To get to the motivations and working style of a potential employee, employers often turn to behavioral interviewing, an interviewing style which consists of a series of probing, incisive questions.

Sample behavioral interview questions include:

- Describe a situation in which you didn't meet your stated goal, how did you handle it?
- Tell us about a situation in which you encountered resistance from key people, how did you convince the person or people to do what you wanted?
- Describe a situation in which you took the initiative to change a process or system and make it better, how did you identify the problem? How did you go about instituting change?

A conscious goal you should have in every interview is finding common human connections. If you set out with the intention to discover how you and the person interviewing you are connected and what you share, you will discover commonalities much faster. And the interviewing process will be much less intimidating because of it.

Tips for discovering commonalities with your interviewer:

- **Do your research.** Google every person you know you are going to meet or think you might meet in the interview, especially senior executives. Learn what might be common areas of interest in advance.
- **Listen and pay attention.** If you listen during the interview and look for commonalities, they will seem omnipresent. When your interviewer mentions his or her alma mater, weekend plans, kids, or favorite restaurant, you have the chance to ask questions and find common ground. You can also take a look around the office. Do you see a book you've read, a product you want or just bought, or a photo you like? If so, you have a means to discuss commonalities.
- **Lead with your interests and passions.** How you introduce yourself and talk about yourself in the interview matters. If you integrate facts and interests into your spiel about yourself, then you create opportunities to connect. After the "What do you do?" or "Tell me about yourself" query, tell your story.
- **Find common ground in the context.** Where you are meeting, your surroundings, and the purpose of your connection are all reference points. There is a reason why both of you find yourself at this unique place and time. Why are you both in this business? Do you know the any of the same people?

Listening

- Ten Commandments of Good Listening -
 - Stop talking. In case you missed the first commandment.
 - Stop talking. Obvious, but not easy.
 - Put the speaker at ease. Create a permissive, supportive climate in which the speaker will feel free to express himself or herself.
 - Show a desire to listen. Act interested and mean it.
 - Remove distractions. External preoccupation is less likely if nothing external is present to preoccupy you.
 - Empathize. Try to experience to some degree the feelings the speaker is experiencing.
 - Be patient. Give the speaker time to finish; don't interrupt.
 - Hold your temper. Don't let your emotions obstruct your thoughts.
 - Go easy on argument and criticism. Suspend judgment.
 - Ask questions. If things are still unclear when a speaker has finished, ask questions which serve to clarify the intended meanings.

Additional listening techniques:

- Preparation. If you know what the topic is ahead of time, learn something about it so you will not be an ignorant listener. Even some careful thinking will allow you to listen more accurately when the communication actually begins.

- Seek intent. Try to discover the intent of the source; why is he or she saying these things?
- Seek structure. Look for an organizational scheme of the message. If the speaker is an accomplished one, you won't have to look very hard; it will be obvious. But if the speaker is less skilled, the responsibility falls to you.
- Analyze. Do not accept what you hear at face value; analyze what the speaker is saying and pay attention to body language.
- Focus. Keep the main topic of the message in mind at all times, using it to bring focus to the information which the speaker supplies.
- Motivate yourself. This may be the most important. Listening takes work, and to do that you may have to "psych yourself up."

Most of us desire to communicate effectively, but do not have a keen appreciation of the communication barriers to be faced. Because of these barriers, there is ample opportunity for something to go wrong in any communication. Competent managers develop an awareness of the barriers and learn to cope with them.

How effectively do you, as a manager, communicate with your superiors, subordinates, and peers? Do you recognize the barriers to effective communication? Have you learned to cope with them? In the discussion that follows, the principal barriers to communicating effectively in today's working environment are identified, and proven techniques for coping with them are considered,

The principal barriers to effective communication are:

- noise,
- poor feedback,
- selection of inappropriate media,
- a wrong mental attitude,
- Insufficient or lack of attention to work selection,
- delay in message transmittal,
- physical separation of the sender and receiver,
- And lack of empathy or a good relationship between the sender and receiver.

Let's examine each of these barriers and possible steps to overcome them. As we conduct this examination, we should remember that any two or more of these barriers may occur in combination.

The Noise Barrier

Samuel Hoffenstein in his poem, "The Wind in the Trees," illustrates quite beautifully the distraction that noise may cause.

Noise is any random or persistent disturbance that obscures, reduces, or confuses the clarity or quality of the message being transmitted. In other words, it is any interference that takes place between the sender and the receiver. This is why we generally identify any communication

problem that can't be fully explained as "noise." The biggest single cause of noise in the communication process may be the assumption that the act of communicating is a simple process - that it doesn't require much thought or practice and all effective managers were born with this skill. This is not true. Effective communication comes with study and practice. The effectiveness of the communication process is dependent upon the capabilities of the senders and receivers.

To overcome the noise barrier to effective communication, one must discover its source. This may not be easy. Noise appears in a variety of ways. During a conversation, have you ever been distracted by the pictures on the wall, the view from the window, a report lying open on a desk, or a conversation taking place in an adjacent room? Many people have been so distracted.

In the perusal of a written communication, have you ever been confused by irrelevant material or the illogical approach taken by the author? Again, many people have.

Once the source, or sources, of the noise has been identified, steps can be taken to overcome it. The noise barrier can't always be overcome but, fortunately, just the awareness of its existence by either the sender or the receiver of a message can help to improve the communication flow.

The Feedback Problem

Feedback is reaction, without it, the sender of the message cannot know whether the recipient has received the entire message or grasped its intent.

The need for feedback should be clearly understood. Feedback is the return of a portion of the message to the sender with new information. It regulates both the transmission and reception. The whole process is straightforward: the sender transmits the message via the most suitable communication media; the receiver gets the message, decodes it, and provides feedback.

In oral, face-to-face communication, the process doesn't happen quite this way. All of these actions occur almost simultaneously. For example, the sender is acting as a receiver while transmitting the message; the receiver is acting as a sender while receiving the message. When the message is transmitted and effectively received, feedback serves as a regulating device. The sender continually adjusts his transmission in response to the feedback. Feedback also alerts the sender to any disruptive noise that may impede reception of the message.

There is no feedback in a one-way communication. Such a communication involves passing ideas, information, directions, and instructions from higher management down the chain of command without asking for a response or checking to see if any action has taken

place. It is not enough to ensure the message has been received. For communication to be effective, a two-way process must exist so the sender knows whether the message has been understood. The two-way communication process involves sending a message down the chain of command and transmitting a response containing information, ideas, and feelings back up the chain. This process has been referred to sometimes as "a process of material influence."

Feedback not only regulates the communication process, but reinforces and stimulates it. In fact, it actually serves as the hallmark of dialogue, because it forces communication and makes it dual. Dual expression, when combined with mutual feedback, becomes a dialogue.

The Problem of Media Selection

In any given situation the medium, or media, for communication must be selected. One medium may work better than another. However, in many cases a combination of media may be used for the communication process to function effectively. Henry H. Albers says that no one communication medium can adequately serve the diverse functional and personal problems of organization dynamics. He believes that "a repetition of ideas in different terms is useful in solving some communication problems." The question then emerges, what combination of media would be most effective? Any project to develop the one best combination of media would prove rather fruitless. There are many combinations that can provide satisfactory results.

The personal qualities of the manager should be a consideration in media selection. As manager, you should recognize your strengths and limitations. You should evaluate your successes and failures in communication and plan to use the media that best fits your style and qualities.

Generally, managers make more frequent use of oral, rather than written, communication. However, the media one selects for communication in a particular situation should correlate with the feedback requirements. A communication failure or partial failure could occur if the media you select for transmittal of a message is inappropriate and necessary feedback is not received. Most simple messages can be transmitted orally - either in a face-to-face discussion, formal briefing, or meeting of the staff. More complex messages should be written in a directive, instruction, memorandum, or report. Very complex messages should be transmitted in both oral and written form. Repetition and review of an oral communication in written form can be a facilitating device.

The Mental Barrier

One principal barrier to effective communication is mental. It consists of noise in the mind of the sender or receiver. Here are four examples:

- **The arrogance of the sender may impair the communication process.**
I
- sender believes he knows everything there is to know about the subject being transmitted, he expects acceptance of his ideas or directions. If the

receiver disagrees with the sender and so states, the sender will not be attuned to the feedback or will find it a challenge to his stated position. Real communication does not take place.

- **The sender may assume the receiver will respond to his message in a logical and rational manner.** The receiver's priorities, problems, or assumptions may differ from the sender's. The receiver's logic may even override that of the sender. In any of these instances, the sender might judge the receiver to be incompetent or even an obstructionist. Communication will fail.
- **The sender may assume he is completely logical and rational - that his position is right and must prevail.** This assumption may be false and no communication takes place.
- **The sender may have some misconceptions, self-interests, or strong emotions about a particular idea or approach, of which he is not aware.** However these traits may be readily evident to the receiver, who may think the sender is hypocritical. This communication will fail, as may all future communications between this sender and receiver.

The Problem of Word Selection

We live in a "verbal" environment. Words constitute the most frequently used tool for communicating. Words usually facilitate communication; however, their careless, improper use in a given situation can create a communication barrier. Arthur Kudner, an advertising executive, once told his son: "All big things have little names such as life and death, peace and war, or dawn, day, night, hope, love, and home. Learn to use little words in a big way. It is hard to do, but they say what you mean. When you don't know what you mean - use big words; they often fool little people."

The words we use should be selected carefully. Dr. Rudolph Flesch, a specialist in words and communication, suggests a way to break through the word barrier:

- Use familiar words in place of the unfamiliar
- Use concrete words in place of the abstract
- Use short words in place of long
- Use single words in place of several

Unfortunately, almost every commonly used word has more than one meaning. Also words have regional meanings or derive new meanings as a result of the development of new industries or fields. The meaning conveyed by the sender's words depends upon the experience and attitude of the receiver. Therefore, one way to penetrate the word barrier is for the sender to strive to speak or write in terms of the receiver's experience and attitude. The better able he is to do this, the more successful the communication will be. Dr. S. E. Hayakawa,

a U.S. Senator from California, expressed it very well when he said, "The meanings of words are not in the words; they are in us."

The Time and Space Barriers: time and space (the physical separation between the sender and the receiver) may serve as barriers to effective communication. You, as a manager, may often feel pressed by time constraints. You may feel there aren't enough hours to accomplish all tasks. One executive puts it this way, "If I can't get the work done in a 24-hour day, I have to work evenings." Caught in the network of your own problems, you may even assume that your subordinates know what you want them to do, and they will proceed to do it. Actually, this may not be the case. Because of your failure to communicate, you may not receive the end product you were expecting.

This same problem may occur when you geographically separate departments or functions of an organization. Quick eye-to-eye communication becomes difficult. The telephone may not provide the answer. The line may be busy when the call is placed, or the person being called may be out of the office. Memoranda sometime provide the answer to the space barrier. However, this might turn out to be a one-way communication of directions or information. If the recipient of a memorandum doesn't understand the message, or if he mistakenly thinks he understands, the communication process fails.

Empathy and Other Relationships

Lack of empathy can create a barrier between the sender and receiver. Empathy, as defined in the Dictionary, is "understanding so intimate that the feelings, thoughts, and motives of one are readily comprehended by another." You can transmit a better message if you can put yourself in the receiver's place and analyze the message from his viewpoint. The same holds true for the receiver. He must be able to empathize with you. That is, the sender, as well as the receiver, must try to project him into the other's personality if he want's to increase his potential for effective communication.

The ability to empathize with someone else may not be easy. If you are to see things from another's viewpoint, you have to put aside your own prejudices and preconceptions. The receiver may be of a different race, creed, educational background, from a different section of the country, or have a different specialty or rank within the organization. Under these circumstances, the task of empathizing with the other member of the communication link is difficult. The task is further complicated if you believe that understanding another's viewpoint may pose a threat to your own.

To better communicate, we must try to see ourselves through the eyes of others in the communication link. By developing some empathy with the people to whom we will be directing messages, we might recognize the need to modify our messages from time to time before sending them.

Douglas McGregor, one of the leading authorities on management practices, has said: "It is a fairly safe generalization that difficulties in communication within an organization are more often than not, mere symptoms of underlying difficulties in relationships between parties involved. When communication is ineffective, one needs to look first at the nature of these relationships rather than at ways of improving communication".

The relationship between the people involved in any communication process may form a greater barrier to the effectiveness of the communication between them than any other barrier discussed here. If the relationship between the people participating in the communication is good, the communication has a greater chance for success. This is true whether the communication takes place in oral or written form.

The quality of the relationship between the sender and receiver determines to a great extent the ability of the person transmitting the message to penetrate the communication barrier.

Self-Check 2	Written Test
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Name: _____

Date: _____

Instruction: Answer all the questions listed below, if you have some clarifications- feel free to ask your teacher.

I. Direction: Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.

- _____ 1. It consists of noise in the mind of the sender or receiver.
- _____ 2. It is one of the most common sources of workplace strife, and interpersonal difficulties.
- _____ 3. What as the first and the last commandment of Good Listening?
- _____ 4. It is a reaction.
- _____ 5. It is any random or persistent disturbance that obscures, reduces, or Confuses the clarity or quality of the message being transmitted.

II. Enumeration: Enumerate the following:

- Give at least 3 conflict resolution to make your work environment a less stressful, more productive place
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Give at least 3 tips for discovering commonalities with your interviewer
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Give at least 3 principal barriers to effective communication
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Give at least 3 commandments of Good Listening
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Note: You must get at least 12 point to pass







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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICE Level II

LEARNINGGUIDE#5

Unit of Competence: -	Participate in workplace communication
Module Title: -	Participating in workplace communication
LG Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 M02 1019 LO2-LG5</u>
TTLM Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 TTLM 1019 V1</u>

LO 2: Participate in workplace meetings and discussions



INTRODUCTION

Learning Guide #5

This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics –

- Communication Media

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this Learning Guide, you will be able to –

- Attend to team meetings on time as scheduled.
- Clearly express own opinions and listen to those of others without interruption.
- Consistent meeting of inputs with the meeting purpose and establish **protocols**.
- Conduct **workplace interactions** in a courteous manner.
- Ask and respond to questions about simple routine workplace procedures and matters concerning working conditions of employment.
- Interpret and implement meetings outcomes based on work place guideline.

Learning Activities

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets 1” in pages 3-7.
3. Accomplish the “Self-check” in pages 8.
4. Your teacher will evaluate your output either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, your teacher shall advise you on additional work. But if satisfactory you can proceed to the next topic.

Information Sheet 1

Communication Media

Communication Media

It's important for employers to teach employees communication skills. By offering classes, setting up interventions, and starting a campaign to educate employees in the workplace, employers can see many benefits. With the correct business communication activities the work environment will become more desirable for employees, productivity will improve, and the retention of important workers will increase. In addition barriers to business communication can be overcome.

Types of communication medium

- Physical media
- Mechanical media (everything that is not No. 1)

Physical media

With physical media we mean channels where the person who is talking can be seen and heard by the audience. The whole point here is to be able to not only hear the messages but also to see the body language and feel the climate in the room. This does not need to be two-way channels. In certain situations the receiver expects physical communication. This is the case especially when dealing with high concern messages, e.g. organizational change or downsizing. If a message is perceived as important to the receiver they expect to hear it live from their manager.

- ✓ Large meetings, town hall meetings
- ✓ Department meetings (weekly meetings)
- ✓ Up close and personal (exclusive meetings)
- ✓ Video conferences
- ✓ Viral communication or word of mouth

Large meetings

Large meetings have got great symbolic value and should be used only at special occasions. This channel works very well when you need to get across strategic and important messages to a large group of people at the same time, creating a wide attention, get engagement or communicate a sense of belonging. Large meetings are excellent when you want to present a new vision or strategy, inform about reorganization or share new values. The opportunity for dialogue is limited at large meeting, of course but you can create smaller groups where dialogue can be performed.

Weekly departmental meetings

In the weekly meetings you and your group communicate daily operative issues, gives status reports and solves problems. Weekly meetings are also used to follow up on information from large meetings, management team meetings etc from a “what’s-in-it-for-

us-perspective”. This type of smaller group meetings gives good opportunities for dialogue. This channel is often the most important channel you have as a manager, because that’s where you have the opportunity to build the big picture, you can prepare for change, you can create ownership of important strategies and goals etc. This is a favorite among the types of communication medium.

Up close and personal

This is a form of meetings where, often, a senior manager meets with a “random” selection of employees to discuss and answer questions. Some managers use this as a ongoing activities on a monthly basis. It can also be used in specific projects or campaigns e.g. launching new strategies.

Viral communication

Or viral marketing as it is also called works external as well as internal and refer to marketing techniques that use pre-existing social networks to produce increases in awareness or knowledge through self-replicating viral processes. It can be word-of-mouth delivered or enhanced by the network effects of social media.

Mechanical media

The second of the two types of communication medium is mechanical media. With mechanical media we mean written or electronic channels. These channels can be used as archives for messages or for giving the big picture and a deeper knowledge. But they can also be very fast. Typically though, because it is written, it is always interpret by the reader based on his or her mental condition. Irony or even humor rarely travels well in mechanical channels.

- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Weekly letters or newsletters
- ✓ Personal letters
- ✓ Billboards
- ✓ Intranet
- ✓ Magazines or papers
- ✓ SMS
- ✓ Social media

E-mail

E-mail is a good channel for the daily communication to specific target groups. It is suitable mainly for up-to-date and “simple” messages and where there is no risk of misunderstanding, E-mail is an important supplement to weekly meetings and the intranet. Invitation to and agenda for meetings can with advantage be sent out with e-mail

before the meeting, while background facts and minutes from meetings is well suited to be stored on the intranet.

Some short e-mail tips:

- Right short and straight to the point.
- Target your messages to the audience and avoid sending unnecessary all-employees-e-mails.
- Set up your subject line to describe what the e-mail is about.
- Clearly state if the message is for information or for action.
- Avoid attaching large documents if possible. Post a link or direct to the source instead.

Weekly letters

Managers that have large groups of employees and who has difficulties in meeting all of them often choose to publish a personally weekly letter. It is sort of a short summary of news with personally reflections. Many employees often appreciate it because it has the potential to give the “what’s-in-it-for-us” angle. They can also contain summaries and status in tasks, projects or issues – yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Personal letters

At special occasions it can be justified to send a personal letter to employees in order to get attention to a specific issue. E.g. pat on the back letter after extra ordinary achievements. Or it can be a letter with your personal commentary on an ongoing reorganization that affects many employees. One other example is a letter that summarizes the past year and wishes all the best for the holidays.

Billboard

One of the most forgotten types of communication medium is clearly the billboard. Especially today, when everything is about social media. But the good thing with the billboard is that you can use billboards to inform people who do not have computers and/or access to the intranet or to reach people that work part time and does not attend weekly meetings.

- ✓ News summary
- ✓ Weekly letters
- ✓ Minutes from meetings
- ✓ Schedules
- ✓ Holiday lists

You can also use the billboard to gather ideas e.g. for items for upcoming meetings

Intranet

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The intranet is of course one of the most used types of communication medium and a very important communication channel and work tool for you as a manager, but it is also your job to help your employees priorities and pick out the information on the intranet, as well as translating messages into local consequences. Ask yourself: what information concerns you employees? In what way are they concerned? How do I best communicate this to my employees? Weekly meeting or your weekly letter can be a suitable channel to discuss or inform of information found on the intranet.

Employee magazine

A Magazine offers the opportunity to deepen a specific issue, explain context, describing consequences or tell a story. It also has the opportunity to reach many employees. If you want to create a broad internal understanding of strategic messages the magazine can be a good vehicle to use e.g. by writing an article based on an interview with you. As were the case with the intranet you also have to “translate” the information in the magazine to your employees. You can ask yourself: What does the content in a specific article mean to us? How shall I best communicate it to the employees?

Sms

Or text messaging to the mobile phone is one of the new types of communication medium and not a very widely used channel but where it is used it is proven very effective. Some companies use it as an alert system e.g. for giving managers a head start when something important will be published on the Intranet. The advantage with Sms is that it is fast. But it should be used rarely as an exclusive channel. Some companies use it as a subscription tool where you can subscribe to press releases.

Social media

Social media is a “Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media supports the human need for social interaction, using Internet- and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one to many) into social media dialogues (many to many). It supports the democratization of knowledge and information, transforming people from content consumers into content producers. Businesses also refer to social media as user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media (CGM).”

More and more companies are using social media in their external marketing, setting up twitter and Facebook accounts etc. But these channels are also used internal where managers become “friends” on Facebook with their employees or where managers use blog and twitter targeting their employees.

Push or Pull

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You can also divide the different types of communication medium in Push or Pull channels.

Push channels are channels where the sender are pushing the message to the receiver. Meaning it is up to the sender to control the communication.

- E-mail
- News letters and letters (if sent out)
- Magazines (if sent out)
- Meetings
- Telephone
- Sms

Pull channels on the other hand is when the receiver is pulling the message from the sender. It is up to the receiver when he or she wants to take in the message.

- Intranet
- Billboards
- New letters and letters (if not sent out)
- Magazines (if not sent out)
- Social media

Push channels are often regarded as having higher reliability than pull channels because of the fact that it is more active in the communication.

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Name: _____

Date: _____

Instruction: Answer all the questions listed below, if you have some clarifications- feel free to ask your teacher.

I. Direction: Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.

- _____ 1. It uses written or electronic channels.
- _____ 2. It is the channel where the person who is talking can be seen and
Heard by the audience.
- _____ 3. It is channels where the sender it controls the communication.



- _____ 4. It is channels where it is up to the receiver when he or she wants to
Take in the message.
- _____ 5. SMS belongs to what kind of channels?
- _____ 6. Billboard belongs to what kind of channels?
- _____ 7. Which channels are often regarded as having higher reliability?

II. Enumeration: Enumerate the following:

- Give at least 2 examples of a pull channels
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Give at least 2 examples of a push channels
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Give at least 2 examples of a physical media
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Give at least 2 examples of a mechanical media
 - 1.
 - 2.

Note: You need to get at least 12 points to pass







FEDRAL TVET AGENCY

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICE

Level II

LEARNING GUIDE #6

Unit of Competence: -	Participate in work place communication
Module Title: -	Participating in work place communication
LG Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 M04 1019 LO3-LG6</u>
TTLM Code:	<u>EIS ITS2 TTLM 1019 V1</u>

LO 3: Complete relevant work related documents

INTRODUCTION

Learning Guide # 6

This learning guide is developed to provide you the necessary information regarding the following content coverage and topics –

- Workplace Communication

This guide will also assist you to attain the learning outcome stated in the cover page. Specifically, upon completion of this Learning Guide, you will be able to –

- Complete accurately and legibly the range of **forms** relating to conditions of employment
- Record workplace data on standard workplace forms and documents.
- Use basic mathematical processes for routine calculations.
- Identify and act upon properly the errors in recording information on forms/ documents
- Complete reporting requirements to supervisor according to organizational guidelines.

Learning Activities

1. Read the specific objectives of this Learning Guide.
2. Read the information written in the “Information Sheets 1” in pages 3-6.
3. Accomplish the “Self-check” in pages 7.

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Your teacher will evaluate your output either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, your teacher shall advice you on additional work. But if satisfactory you can proceed to the next topic.

Information Sheet 1	Workplace Communication
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1. Memorandum

A **memorandum** or **memo** is a document or other communication that helps the memory by recording events or observations on a topic, such as may be used in a business office. The plural form is either *memoranda* or *memorandums*.

A memorandum may have any format, or it may have a format specific to an office or institution. In law specifically, a memorandum is a record of the terms of a transaction or contract, such as a policy memo, memorandum of understanding, memorandum of agreement, or memorandum of association. Alternative formats include memos, briefing notes, reports, letters or binders. They could be one page long or many. If the user is a cabinet minister or a senior executive, the format might be rigidly defined and limited to one or two pages. If the user is a colleague, the format is usually much more flexible. At its most basic level, a memorandum can be a handwritten note to one's supervisor.

Purpose

The primary purpose of a briefing note “for decision” is to support decision making – to “help (or sometimes influence) a decision-maker to make a better decision in a particular problem situation than he might otherwise have made without the analysis”

Structure

As the communication mechanism of the policy analysis process, the briefing note should provide a coherent synopsis of a policy problem, identify different policy options for addressing the problem, articulate opposing perspectives and advocate a recommended option. The typical structure for a briefing note includes: a description of the proposed policy; relevant background information; a discussion of key considerations (including implementation concerns, financial considerations, stakeholder impacts, and possible unanticipated consequences), a summary of arguments for and against the policy and a recommended decision. Policy documents that start with a proposal and assemble an argument that position are more accurately referred to as a government white paper. A government green paper which raises a policy option and is meant to open a dialogue on the proposal is more similar in tone to a briefing note than is a white paper.

Quality criteria

There is no universal standard for a briefing note, but it is generally understood to be a concise, coherent summary of a public policy problem with a clearly articulated logic for following a recommended course of action. “Next to a political nose, and a logical brain, the most important skill of the good treasury [person] resides in [their] fine drafting hand. The concise, coherent and penetrating note is the final expression of all other talents.” In many Westminster / Whitehall governance settings, policy analysts are expected to analyze the issue and write the briefing note from a neutral public service perspective. However, the briefing note “for decision” must contain a recommendation, acknowledging that “to say anything of importance in public policy requires value judgments, which must be explained and justified

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2. Circular

Circular may also refer to:

Documents

- Circular note, a document request by a bank to its foreign correspondents to pay a specified sum of money to a named person
- Flyer (pamphlet), sometimes referred to as a circular, is a notice sent out in large quantities
- Government circular, a written statement of government policy
- Circular letter (disambiguation), multiple meanings
- List of circulars, multiple documents

3. Notice

(1): warning or intimation of something: announcement

(2): the announcement of a party's intention to quit an agreement or relation at a specified time

(3): the condition of being warned or notified —usually used in the phrase *on notice*

4. Follow up/verbal instructions

Consistent and prompt follow-up habits are an essential part of good verbal communication skills. It will help you maintain positive rapport, confidence and trust with your peers, clients and employer. You can think of several occasions when someone promised to get back with you within a certain time frame, but failed to do so-- if at all. I'm sure this had a negative impact on your professional interpretation of that individual or business. No matter what size business or position held within an organization there is always room for improvement of communication skills in areas such as follow-up.

One such important tool used to maintain order in a company is the business meeting. Business meetings can be considered a period of meditation since the meetings discuss important issues that is worth meditating about.

For example, a meetings topic was about how production is decreasing since the last month due to product failure, thus meeting was proposed in order to amplify that such mistakes should be minimized by finding a way to avoid these product failures, since the failures are affecting the company's production at a critical point. Now the follow-up would be applying the agreement made to minimize the product failure in a daily basis. What is the importance of follow-up after a meeting?

The Importance of Meeting Follow-up

Business meetings are without doubt the best tool for a company for the fact that it provides crucial information about the company's progress and how well is business. In other words business meetings are used to show the company's achievements as well as the company's weaknesses.

This is why it's important to follow up after a meeting, because a company's success depends on the follow up after a business meeting. When you follow-up after a meeting it shows others you care and that you have a desire to succeed.

Not every meetings agreement is successful, sometimes it may contain glitches along the way, thus is important to follow-up because you will notice these glitches and allow the team to troubleshoot the problem and come up with another agreement.

How do follow-up after a Meeting

Another form of follow-up is to have additional meetings to visualize if the agreement is working well. The purpose of the meeting would be a total waste if the agreement would still be in application and later realized perhaps a year later that the problem still persists.

It is then recommended to propose these additional meetings as a check-point to the agreement and it is suggested to record the data of the work or follow-up for the meeting to have as a reference in case of a need for a new solution. These meetings can serve to reduce and solve any form of frustration.

Referring back to the decreasing production illustration, let's say that the company is a lock assembling company and let's imagine that the agreement is to reduce the amount of grease used since it was found that the grease was causing the locks to fail. Later it was found that without using the same amount of grease the locks mechanical parts wouldn't flow smoothly so then it was causing it hard to test the locks.

Face to face communication

In the world of modern technology we can communicate with virtually anybody, anytime, anywhere. We have email, cell phones, instant message, video conference, web meetings, text messages, Facebook, whew! Makes my head spin. With all these options, why would we ever just communicate the old fashion way—face-to-face?

Modern communication technology is wonderful but it has its limitations. If you really want to reach understanding in your exchange with another person, there is nothing better than standing face to face with another human being and engaging in real dialog. Here's why and how you can be more effective in this basic business and life skill.

When face to face with another person, you have the best opportunity to more completely understand and be understood. You can easily misread a person's tone or attitude in an email or text message. When you hear a person speak you tell right away if he or she is upset, fragile, annoyed or angry. Most people can't hide their emotions when they talk. At some point their true feelings will emerge and give you a much better understanding of what they are saying.

You have no sense of a person's body language on a cell phone. You may not hear it in their voice but when you see them in person you can tell if they are distracted when they shift their eyes, look at their watch, yawn or fidget with their keys or any other object. These are clues as to what is going on inside the person's head.

When speaking face to face you should listen and read all these signals. The non-verbal signals give you a better understanding for what is NOT being said. Once you sense that they are holding back

from what you observe, if your relationship is secure you can probe a little deeper and ask: “Why don’t you tell me what you really feel?”



Whether you are speaking or listening, you should always maintain good eye contact. If you are the listener and your body tells the person you have no interest in what is being said, the communication will be cut short and the relationship damaged. Zero in on the person with your eyes. Take advantage of the fact that you are together and maximize on the time. Don’t answer your phone, send text messages or engage in anything other than the conversation.

In a face-to-face meeting you have time to ask for clarification. Most people don’t have enough patience to go into deep explanations in a text message or an email. If you try to go into great depth on the phone it’s easy for your listener to lose interest and be distracted by their surroundings. When someone looks you in the eye and pours out their heart to you it’s pretty insensitive to do anything less than give them your full attention.

The old TV commercials for a certain phone company used to encourage people to “reach out and touch someone.” It was a great slogan but I’ve never been able to do that through the phone. Touch is an important component in communication. If someone is struggling, nervous, frustrated, grieving, or depressed, a simple touch or an embrace can add a dimension to the conversation unachievable through any long distance communication tool. Just think of a firm handshake at the beginning of a business encounter or the closing of a deal. It either sets the tone or sums the meeting in a matter of seconds.

If you need to convince or persuade someone to take action, close a deal or make a commitment, it’s much easier for that person to say no on the phone or via email than it is to say no to your face. Use face-to-face opportunities when you need to communicate your passion or convictions. In those encounters you become as much of the message as your words or presentation. Words are powerful but when they are combined with a flesh and blood human being standing a few feet away people will listen more intently and are less likely to check out quickly

Self-Check 1	Written Test
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Name: _____

Date: _____

Instruction: Answer all the questions listed below, if you have some clarifications- feel free to ask your teacher.



I. Direction: Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.

- _____ 1. Its primary purpose is to support decision making.
- _____ 2. It is a document or other communication that helps the memory by recording events or observations on a topic, such as may be used in a business office.
- _____ 3. This letter gives warning or notification.
- _____ 4. This also refers to documents.
- _____ 5. Which is still the best way to communicate?

II. Enumeration: Enumerate the following:

- Give at least 2 examples Circulars
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Give at least 2 examples Notices
 - 1.
 - 2.
- Give at least 2 formats of a memo
 - 1.
 - 2.

Note: You need to get at least 8 points to pass.



- *Your teacher will evaluate your output either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, your trainer shall advice you on additional work. But if satisfactory, you can proceed to the next topic.*

UC: Participate in Workplace Communication
LO1: Obtain & Convey Workplace Communication
SELF-CHECK 1

Answer keys:

I.

1. Communication
2. Listening
3. Non-verbal communication
4. Eye-contact
5. Non-verbal communication
6. Verbal Communication

II.

1. Meetings
2. Presentations & Lectures
3. Workshops
4. Conversations

1. Eye-Contact
2. Postures
3. Gestures

UC: Participate in Workplace Communication

LO1: Communication Difficulties

SELF-CHECK 2

Answer keys:

I.

1. Mental Barrier
2. Misunderstandings and communication problems
3. Stop talking
4. Feedback
5. Noise

II. Any 3 among the list

1. Be specific in formulating your complaints
2. Resist the temptation to involve yourself
3. Try to depersonalize conflicts
4. Be open and listen
5. Don't always involve your superiors
6. If an extended discussion is necessary, agree first then take it outside
7. Limit your complaints
8. Know when conflict isn't just conflict
9. Consider a mediator
10. Take home point: It's not all about you

1. Do your research
2. Listen and pay attention
3. Lead with your interests and passions
4. Find common ground in the context

1. noise,
2. poor feedback,
3. selection of inappropriate media,
4. a wrong mental attitude,
5. Insufficient or lack of attention to work selection,
6. delay in message transmittal,
7. physical separation of the sender and receiver,
8. And lack of empathy or a good relationship between the sender and receiver.

1. Stop talking
2. Put the speaker at ease
3. Show a desire to listen
4. Remove distractions
5. Empathize
6. Be patient
7. Hold your temper
8. Go easy on argument and criticism
9. Ask questions
10. Stop talking

UC: Participate in Workplace Communication
LO1: Obtain & Convey Workplace Communication
SELF-CHECK 1

Answer keys:

I.

1. Mechanical media
2. Physical Media
3. Push Channels
4. Pull Channels
5. Push Channels
6. Pull Channels
7. Push Channels

II.

1. Intranet
2. Billboards
3. New letters and letters (if not sent out)
4. Magazines (if not sent out)
5. Social media

1. E-mail
2. News letters and letters (if sent out)
3. Magazines (if sent out)
4. Meetings
5. Telephone
6. Sms

1. Large meetings, town hall meetings
2. Department meetings (weekly meetings)
3. Up close and personal (exclusive meetings)
4. Video conferences
5. Viral communication or word of mouth

1. E-mail
2. Weekly letters or newsletters
3. Personal letters
4. Billboards
5. Intranet
6. Magazines or papers
7. SMS
8. Social media

UC: Participate in Workplace Communication
LO1: Obtain & Convey Workplace Communication
SELF-CHECK 1

Answer keys:

I.

1. Briefing Note
2. Memorandum
3. Notices
4. Circular
5. Face-to-Face

II.

1. Circular note
2. Flyer (pamphlet)
3. Government circular
4. Circular letter (disambiguation)
5. List of circulars, multiple documents

1. warning or intimation of something: announcement
2. the announcement of a party's intention to quit an agreement or relation at a specified time
3. the condition of being warned or notified

1. memos
2. briefing notes
3. reports
4. letters or binders