

# 500 words Communicating and Influencing

1. Communicate clearly and concisely both orally and in writing.
2. Take time to consider the best communication channel to use for the audience, including making the best of digital resources and considering value for money.
3. Interact with others in an enthusiastic way.
4. Express ideas clearly and with respect for others.
5. Listen to and value different ideas, views and ways of working.
6. Respond constructively and objectively to comments and questions.
7. Handle challenging conversations with confidence and sensitivity.

While studying Computer Games Programming at the University of Westminster, I found myself immersed in a challenging environment. My group was tasked with a Game Design Project, featuring a game programmed from scratch and 3D graphics simulating real life. All these tasks were equally distributed among us, while every student was already juggling heavy university demands.

The University of Westminster was known for fostering cross-discipline collaboration, encouraging students to mix coursework projects with peers outside their immediate group. This innovative approach led me to meet Tim, a PhD student from our Music Department. Tim offered to compose music for the game, envisioning an original soundtrack that would create an immersive atmosphere of adventure and provide positive reinforcement to guide players through the game environment (5). In fact, during the early development process, I was very enthusiastic about discussing potential new features and how things should work (1, 3, 4). Tim emailed me his music samples along with a detailed Proposal Document (2). Excited by his ideas, I presented them to my group (2, 4). However, the group rejected Tim's proposal, citing time constraints and the need to focus on the basic prototype to meet the approaching deadline. I respected my group's perspective and agreed to prioritize simplicity and essential features only (5, 6, 7).

But I couldn't shake the belief that incorporating Tim's music could significantly enhance our game's value. I kept in touch with Tim, painfully aware that a game with a dynamic soundtrack could stand out in the competitive games market. My son, an advanced gamer, suggested that I could "do more faster" by using software libraries and integrating the background music very quickly. I decided to act. During our next group meeting, I presented a prototype of the game that included Tim's music (1). The transformation was undeniable. The immersive soundtrack added a new dimension to our game, making it more engaging and enjoyable. My group, initially sceptical, was impressed and agreed to proceed with the enhanced version. We officially brought Tim onto our project, acknowledging his contribution and giving him full credit.

This experience gave me valuable lessons. First, the importance of keeping an open communication and staying receptive to new ideas, even when they seem challenging at first. By seeking a creative solution, we were able to elevate our project without compromising our deadline. Second, the value of collaboration became clear. Tim's expertise in music added a crucial element that we, as computer programmers, might have overlooked.

Finally, the experience proved the importance of influence. By not giving up on Tim's ideas and exploring ways to integrate his music efficiently, I maximized the value of our game project. The final product was not just a basic functional game, but an immersive experience with rich audio-visual elements, ready to compete in the computer games market (2). In the end, our project was a success. Our group delivered a quality game on time, enriched with an original soundtrack that set it apart from others. This journey from initial rejection to eventual acceptance highlighted the power of communication and influencing.