



Becoming confident with your communication skills

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



Module overview

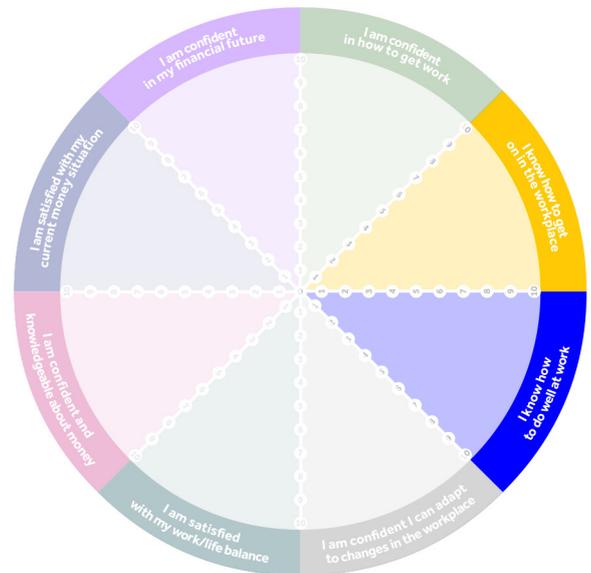
This module will support learners to become confident and effective communicators both within and outside of the workplace. It will also assist learners to identify different communication techniques and learn the importance of adapting communication styles to different audiences. The module includes relevant activities to build rapport, practise active listening techniques and identify good communication skills.

Time	Key learning outcomes	Which will lead to
45 mins	<p>By the end of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of confident communication and building rapport Identify the essential aspects of good communication, including its contribution to effective teamwork Understand the importance of adapting communication skills to different audiences Learn key active listening skills Communicate with confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved employability and job management skills

Important

Introduce the activity and theme and remind your learner of the coaching-based approach. Agree the desired outcome of the session with your learner.

Throughout the activity, we have included **'do now'**, **'do soon'** and **'do later'** actions which may help your learner to think about the next steps they could take. Alternatively, you could use the **'do now'**, **'do soon'** and **'do later'** headings to help your learner come up with their own actions.



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Core activity one

Identifying different ways to communicate

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 2-3 mins	<p>Begin the session by referring to your learner’s LifeSkills wheel emphasising positives and things to improve.</p> <p>Discuss what they need to know/do to be able to increase how they rate their satisfaction with this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are reminded of where they are now and what they need to do to reach a higher satisfaction score within this area
⌚ 3-5 mins	<p>Explain to your learner that communication is at the heart of everything that we do and is an essential skill both in and out of the workplace. Remind your learner that they already use communication skills, for example playing or coaching a football team, volunteering at a kids’ club, organising an event with friends on social media etc. Mention that these skills are transferable into the working environment.</p> <p>Discuss why good communication is so important for teambuilding and what effect this might have in the workplace. Explain that good and effective communication leads to strong, lasting relationships and the building of trust, which leads to increased productivity, outputs and team morale.</p> <p>Outline the many different ways of communicating including spoken, written, non-verbal, on the telephone, instant messenger, video, web-conferencing, email and other digital channels. Explain that it is important to keep lines of communication open, particularly when working with people in other areas as you may not be able to meet them face-to-face.</p> <p>To help your learner identify effective communication skills, ask your learner:</p> <p>What do good communication skills look like?</p> <p>Give examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building rapport Active listening Adapting your communication style to your audience Friendliness Confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will understand that there are many different ways to communicate and the importance of communication both within and outside of the workplace

Core activity two

Verbal and non-verbal cues

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
<p> 10-20 mins</p>	<p>After establishing a starting point, ask your learner prompt questions, such as:</p> <p>Why is building rapport important?</p> <p>Why is it important to consider your audience and tone of voice when you talk to different people?</p> <p>What can you learn from listening to other people's tone of voice and language?</p> <p>Encourage further discussion with questions based upon your learner's situation, for example:</p> <p>Give an example of when you communicated well?</p> <p>How did you build rapport?</p> <p>Who was your audience?</p> <p>Explain that to help confident conversation, rapport building is maximised by the interaction of listening and asking interesting questions and also through non-verbal cues such as body language and making eye contact.</p> <p>Ask your learner why communication needs to be tailored to different audiences. Explain that, in each situation, communication will have a certain goal. The importance of adapting communication style depending upon who the audience is and their level of understanding.</p> <p>Explain to your learner that they now have the opportunity to practice their communication skills in short role play scenarios to support them to communicate with confidence.</p> <p>Start by role playing scenario one on the Communication role play scenarios handout to build your learner's confidence. On completion, ask your learner to reflect on their communication, give praise and make suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>Following this, ask your learner to choose one of the other scenarios from the handout provided. Again ask your learner to reflect on their communication, give praise and make suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>If time allows, repeat activity a third time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will understand that good communication uses verbal and non-verbal cues Learners will have the opportunity to practice their communication skills

Core activity three

Practise active listening skills

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
<p> 5-10 mins</p>	<p>Ask your learner:</p> <p>What is we meant by 'active listening'?</p> <p>Explain that active listening means paying close attention to the person who is speaking to you so you understand, remember and can respond to the information you have been told. A good communicator will speak clearly to make listening and understanding easier for an active listener.</p> <p>Explain that through listening, you should be able to understand the intentions and point of view of the person speaking to you. By asking probing relevant questions, you can gain a better understanding of what they are saying.</p> <p>Talk through the Active listening techniques. Explain that active listening is a skill that needs to be practised and developed and that your learner will now have a chance to do this.</p> <p>Explain that you are going to talk for one minute about a subject you are passionate about, for example, movies, hobbies or sports.</p> <p>Your learner then has one minute to recall as much of your talk as possible. After the minute is up, ask your learner to repeat back to you everything they can remember.</p> <p>Can they remember it all?</p> <p>Follow this by asking questions such as:</p> <p>What tone of voice did I use when speaking?</p> <p>Did you use any active listening techniques?</p> <p>What questions did it prompt you to think about?</p> <p>How could I improve my communication?</p> <p>After asking your learner to reflect on their communication, give praise and make suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>If there is time, you could repeat the activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will have the opportunity to practice their active listening skills Learners will be able to identify techniques to improve their active listening

Wrap up

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 5-7 mins	<p>Remind your learner that being a good communicator aids building good relationships and it is a 'two way' process. Recap on the key skills to good communication, including the ability to understand non-verbal communication, active listening and the ability to change your communication style depending on your audience.</p> <p>Do now: Stick up the Active listening techniques somewhere you'll see them regularly</p> <p>Do soon: Think of any upcoming opportunities to practice your communication skills using the techniques you have learnt in this session. How can you ensure your communication is engaging and appropriate for your audience?</p> <p>Do later: Practice rapport building techniques with people that you meet for the first time using verbal and non-verbal cues</p> <p>Signpost to the following modules if relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost to the following modules if relevant: • Interview skills 1-3 • Creating your personal brand • Values and behaviours to succeed at work • Feeling confident in employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will leave the session confident that they have a deeper understanding of effective communication skills

Optional extension

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 10-20 mins	<p>Using the Scenarios of different audiences handout, support your learner to practice introducing themselves to different audiences.</p> <p>After each scenario ask your learner to reflect on their communication, run through the top tips, give praise and make suggestions for improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners should feel confident in adapting their communication techniques to different audiences in the future

Becoming confident with your communication skills

Communication role play scenarios

Scenario one

You have just started a new job and are asked by your manager to send an email out to your new team introducing yourself.

What do you need to consider before sending the email?

How would you start the email?

What key messages would you want to communicate?

What tone of voice would you use?

Prompts:

- Friendly, confident and professional tone
- Explain your new job role and any tasks you'll be working on
- Provide information about your background, for example previous jobs/relevant experience that you bring to the team

Scenario two

You are working as a customer assistant in hospitality. A regular customer comes to the till area and claims you overcharged them on their bill.

How would you communicate with them to resolve the problem?

What tone of voice would you use?

How could you use active listening techniques to defuse the situation?

Prompts:

- Friendly tone
- Show understanding of their situation
- Use active listening techniques such as:
 - Keep your thoughts focussed on the person you are listening to
 - Use non-verbal cues which show understanding such as nodding, eye contact, and leaning forward
 - Use verbal affirmations such as "I understand" and "these are the main points I've heard you raise so far"
- Ensure you have a non-judgemental expression and open body language

Becoming confident with your communication skills

Communication role play scenarios

Scenario three

You are new to a team working on a construction project which has tight deadlines. You come up with an idea which will reduce the time required for part of the project however you need to convince your colleagues. They have been working on the project for a month already and don't seem willing to change their approach.

How could you communicate your idea to them?

Prompts:

- Be friendly and confident in your tone
- Listen to your colleagues' points of view
- Show understanding
- Speak clearly
- Try to anticipate any questions or concerns they may have and think carefully about how you will answer questions
- Ensure your answers are clear and concise

Scenario four

You are working with a group of volunteers at a music festival and have a conference call to give all volunteers instructions on their roles at the event. You need to ensure everyone is clear on their roles as there are a number of volunteers spread over a large area at the festival so you may not be able to communicate with them during the day itself.

How would you communicate effectively to the group?

What key messages would you want to communicate?

How would you ensure all of the volunteers have understood your message?

Prompts:

- Friendly, confident and professional tone
- Check the volunteers' understanding by asking clarifying questions
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Communicate the role of the volunteers, the timings and locations
- Try to anticipate any questions or concerns they may have and think carefully about how you will answer questions
- Ensure your answers are clear and concise

Becoming confident with your communication skills

Active listening techniques

When we show someone we are really listening to them, they will really appreciate our attention. In addition, we will learn more. This is called active listening and it is an important communication technique. It is also respectful and shows that you are interested in what a person is saying.

Active listening techniques

- Keep your thoughts focussed on the person you are listening to. Keep your focus 'in the moment'. Try not to let your mind wander off
- Maintain eye contact with the speaker, if possible
- Check understanding by asking clarifying questions
- Try to avoid interrupting the person who is speaking but instead make notes as prompts to come back to when they have finished talking
- Try not to start planning what to say next while the person is still speaking as you may miss something
- Paraphrase and summarise back to the speaker
- Use non-verbal cues which show understanding such as nodding, eye contact, and leaning forward
- Use brief verbal affirmations like "I see," "I know," "Sure," "Thank you," or "I understand"
- Self-reflect to check:
 - Whether you have identified the key themes, implications and issues in what you've listened to
 - Whether you have got a good understanding and can analyse different points of views from what you have heard

Becoming confident with your communication skills

Scenarios of different audiences

Scenario one

You have been asked to attend an interview for a new job. The interviewee asks you to introduce yourself.

What would you say?

Tips

- Keep your answer clear and concise
- Focus on three key points
- Keep your answer less than two minutes
- Consider what responses you may get off the back of your answer so you can plan how to answer them

Scenario two

You work in sales selling ink cartridges to businesses in your local area. You get connected to the office manager.

How do you communicate with them in order to make a sale?

Prompts:

- Build rapport
- Be friendly
- Use active listening techniques to understand their requirements