



# Consolidate Verbal/Signed Communication Skills

Name \_\_\_\_\_

tafeSA I.D. Number \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Program \_\_\_\_\_

# CONSOLIDATE VERBAL/SIGNED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

**TAFE SA Code:** CAAEY

**Nominal Hours:** 30

## Unit Descriptor:

The focus of this unit is to consolidate the learner's skills and knowledge necessary in communicating within a community, education or vocational context.

## Application of Unit:

This unit applies to learners wanting to develop verbal communication skills for self, employment, education and/or community participation. It provides learners with the opportunity to identify and develop appropriate communication strategies when seeking and/or giving information at reception counters, making appointments and maintaining extended casual conversations.

It will consolidate communication skills already gained and should ensure the learner has the necessary skills to achieve level 2 of the ACSF indicators of competence in verbal/signed communications.

See Australian Core Skills framework levels of Performance for more detail.

<http://deewr.gov.au/SKILLS/PROGRAMS/LITANDNUM/ACSF/Pages/default.aspx>

To enhance the outcomes for learners it is recommended that this unit be taught concurrently with other units at this level and that assessments include both integrated and stand alone tasks.

To achieve competency in this unit, young people need to be able to communicate with others in a range of predictable situations to gain and give information and engage in an extended conversation with one to four others

## Young people need to demonstrate:

- Open listening/attending skills
- Clarify ambiguous messages
- Interpret verbal/non-verbal messages
- Determine the intent of the message

## **Interpersonal skills demonstrated include:**

- Extending discussions
- Expressing opinions respectfully
- Identifying strength of emotions when communicating
- Extend conversations
- Express own opinion appropriately

## **Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit:**

This unit of work is set out as a series of explicit tasks that the facilitator will lead young people through as well as independent learning tasks.

It contains a range of opportunities to assist the young person to meet the performance criteria (see checklist).

Competence is demonstrated through holistic and simulated/real life tasks rather than a specific individual assessment for each concept.

Authentic communication opportunities may include:

- Interviews with case managers
- Making appointments and other phone conversations
- Taking messages and relaying them
- Joining in group conversations/discussions
- Conflict resolution conversations

## **Context of and specific resources for assessment:**

A range of assessment strategies are required to demonstrate competency of this unit including:

- Observation
- Group work
- Comprehension questions
- Presentation in group discussions
- Peer/self assessment

## **Consistency of performance:**

This unit of competency must be assessed over a period of time in order to ensure consistency of performance over the Range Statements and contexts.

# Consolidate Oral / Signed Communication Skills

## Certificate 1 Education and Skills Development

### Compulsory Unit

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

TAFE ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Criteria	Date Assessed	WPA Initial
<b>1. Participate in <i>brief interactions</i> in a range of everyday situations</b>		
1.1 Demonstrate open listening/attending skills		
1.2 Clarify ambiguous messages		
1.3 Interpret verbal/signed and non-verbal messages as they were intended		
1.4 Respond appropriately to a <i>variety of messages</i>		
1.5 <i>Pass information</i> to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party accurately		
<b>2. Participate in an <i>extended conversation</i> in everyday situations</b>		
2.1 Apply listening/attending skills in <i>various situations</i>		
2.2 Determine the intent of the message		
2.3 Extend the discussion by adding information and asking questions		
2.4 Exhibit appropriate turn-taking behaviour		
2.5 Express own opinion appropriately		
2.6 Demonstrate respect for the opinion of others while agreeing or disagreeing		
2.7 Identify the <i>impact of own and others feelings and emotions</i> when communicating		

**Result:** achieved / not yet achieved

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Consolidate oral/signed communication skills

## Observation Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Observation:	Date:	Initials:	Date:	Initials:
Listens to and can follow instructions				
Asks questions to check meaning				
Seeks information in less familiar situations				
Is aware of body language and can interpret the non-verbal signals				
Can share information with others accurately				
Greets and farewells people appropriately				
Initiates a conversation with someone				
Takes turns in a conversation				
Asks appropriate questions to extend the conversation				
Provides own opinion				
Respects the opinions of others even when it is not their opinion				
Shows awareness of own body language when communicating				
Identifies the emotions and feelings of others in conversations				

\* Observations need to occur over a period of time and demonstrated on 2 separate occasions



## Setting the Scene...The power of words

Check out the following clip on You Tube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hzgzim5m7oU>

It's not just what we say – it is how we say it that is important.



## Group Discussion:

What is communication?

Come up with a definition of what you think communication is.

Why do we need to communicate?

Write down some reasons you can think of.

Brainstorm and make a list of all the different ways we communicate.

Think about direct communication e.g. chatting and indirect communication e.g. SMS, Facebook, newspapers etc.



## What makes a good communicator?

For some people good communication comes naturally and easily, and for others, being a good communicator is quite hard work and can be challenging. Most good communicators have certain characteristics in common.

Have a think about the things that make people effective communicators.

Survey some other people as well and see if you can come up with a list of ideas.



**Record this info here or get creative and make a poster.**



**Here are some ideas to get you started...**

- make eye contact
- active listening (being attentive while the other person is talking)
- don't interrupt
- speak in complete sentences
- talk in a clear voice at the appropriate volume
- don't sound bored or arrogant
- get to the point without dragging it out too long
- think before you speak



## What to do if you don't understand someone?

Sometime people say things to us that we don't understand. Think about a time when this has happened to you and record below.

How did you feel?

What are some strategies we can use when we don't understand the message? (Keep in mind there are some good strategies and some not so good strategies) Have a go at thinking of both!

Strategies to use if you don't understand what someone has said	Possible consequences of using this strategy
E.g. ignore it –just let it go	Miss out on something important

Think about the consequences for each of the strategies you have identified. With a highlighter, highlight the strategies that would work best, to ensure you get the message right.





# Verbal and Non-verbal

Have you ever made an instant judgment about a person, without ever speaking to the person or hearing what they are saying? Can you tell when people are worried, afraid, or angry just by looking at them? This is called Non-verbal communication.

Research suggests that very little of our communication is actually verbal. About 93% of the information we give and receive is actually non-verbal.

## Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication can be more powerful than verbal communication. It can contradict or undermine verbal communication. You can tell how well someone is receiving your message by watching for non-verbal "signals." It is important to realise that non-verbal communication is sometimes strongly connected to culture and gender, and that the same "signal" can carry different meanings when coming from different people. When you are unsure of what someone is communicating, it is always best to ask for clarification.

## Five parts to non-verbal communication

There are five main "channels" for non-verbal communication--posture/stance, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, and vocal qualities (use of voice). The following are a few examples of types of communication in each of the categories:

- **Posture:** slouching can suggest boredom; leaning forward can suggest interest and openness, etc.
- **Gestures:** clenched fists suggest anger, fidgety hands can suggest nervousness
- **Eye Contact:** avoiding eye contact can suggest lack of self-confidence, looking downward suggests shame, direct eye contact suggests confidence
- **Facial Expressions:** aside from the obvious - smiles, frowns, etc. facial expressions can *hide* the true intention of the message
- **Vocal Qualities:** raising the volume of your voice can suggest anger, mumbling can suggest lack of self-confidence, speaking more slowly and deliberately can communicate that you think the other person doesn't understand you



Write down some examples of verbal and non-verbal communication that you have observed.

Verbal	Non-Verbal

It's important to be aware of non-verbal messages, so we can avoid sending and receiving unintentional messages.



### Silent TV

Go onto You Tube and watch a 5 minute clip of a TV drama e.g. *Home and Away* with the volume turned OFF.

What do you think was happening – what were the actors saying and doing?

What were some of the non-verbal cues that you noticed?

We can gain meaning from the clip without actually hearing it, by looking at the non-verbal communication.



## Here are a couple of group activities to explore non-verbal communication.

### **We Have to Move Now!**

- a) Cut several strips of paper.
- b) On each strip of paper, write down a mood or a feeling like guilty, happy, suspicious, paranoid, insulted, or insecure.
- c) Fold the strips of paper and put them into a bowl. They will be prompts.
- d) Have each young person take a prompt from the bowl and read the same sentence to the group, expressing the mood they've picked.
- e) The first person will read the sentence: e.g. "We all need to move to another building as soon as possible!" to match the mood written on their paper e.g. angry, excited or scared
- f) The others write down assumptions they make about each participant's mood and see how many they can guess correctly.

### **Stack the Deck**

For this exercise, you will need a regular pack of playing cards and a lot of moving-around space.

- a) Shuffle the deck of cards well and walk around the room to give each student a card.
- b) Instruct the young people to keep their cards a secret. No one can see the type or colour of another's card.
- c) Make it clear that they will not be able to talk during this exercise.
- d) Instruct everyone to assemble into four groups according to suits (hearts, clubs, diamonds, spades) using nonverbal communication.
- e) Once people get into those groups, they must line up in order of rank, from ace to king.
- f) The group that lines up in proper order first wins!

Taken from: <http://homeworktips.about.com/od/mindandbody/a/nonverbal.htm>



## Active Listening

What is active listening?

Why is this an important skill to have?

### Here are some tips for listening actively

- Ask for extra info e.g. “How so?” “In what way?” “Why?” or “Tell me more...”
- Paraphrase the message and repeat it back.
- Acknowledge that you understand the other person's thoughts and feelings.
- Be aware of your non-verbals e.g. eye contact, body language and send the message that you are engaging with what is being said.

**There are a lot of road blocks to active listening that can stop you from being an active listener and getting the right message.**

### Some examples of this are:

- **Rehearsing:** spending your mental energy on preparing what you will say in response
- **Judging:** “writing off” a person as stupid or incompetent or uninformed and therefore not paying close attention to what he or she is saying
- **Identifying:** relating everything the person says back to yourself so that the conversation becomes focused around you
- **Advising:** trying to solve a problem or give advice before the other person has finished speaking
- **Sparring:** being too quick to disagree or create an argument with the speaker
- **Derailing:** constantly changing the topic of conversation
- **Dreaming:** “checking out” or daydreaming rather than focusing on what the speaker is saying
- **Smoothing Over:** being so concerned that you are pleasant, agreeable and well-liked that you don't really engage with what the person is saying

*(Adapted from Leadership 101: Developing Leadership Skills for Resilient Youth, Facilitator's Guide by Mariam MacGregor, Youthleadership.com, 2000)*



## Passing on information

Sometimes you will need to take messages for people or pass on information.

This is where you will need to be an **ACTIVE LISTENER** or you will get the message wrong.

When would you need to take a message and pass information on to someone else?

How would you do this...what strategies could you use?

What would happen if you got it wrong?



Practice taking a message for the following phone call (You can role play it if you like!!)

### Phone conversation:

Person	Conversation
Kyle	Phone rings....Hello
Carol	Oh Hello, it's Carol here from Dr Virus's rooms. I was wondering if Sharon was available.
Kyle	Nup, that's my Mum and she's not home.
Carol	Hmmm...Ok then, Could you please pass on a message to her?
Kyle	Yep
Carol	Could you please let her know that the blood test results are back and Dr Virus would like her to come in and see him on Monday at 10.15am. Now, Dr Virus won't be at his usual rooms on Monday and he'll be seeing his patients from the Beach Rd surgery which is at number 57. Right across the road from Subway.
Kyle	OK
Carol	Oh and one more thing, It's really important that Sharon brings her x-rays in also, so that Dr Virus can have a look at them too.
Kyle	No worries
Carol	Ok dear, well if Sharon needs to change the appointment she can give me a ring on 987 123
Kyle	Yep, Bye
Carol	Thank you, goodbye.

Record your message here:



## Being a good communicator

**Think of how often you communicate with people during your day.**

Think back over your day and make a list of some examples of how you have communicated.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**We can make sure that we communicate in the clearest, most effective way possible.**

Mind Tools has identified **7 Cs of Communication** to make sure that your communication is clear and the person you are communicating with gets the message.

[http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCS\\_85.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCS_85.htm)

**According to the 7 Cs, communication needs to be:**

## **Clear**

When you are writing or speaking to someone, you need to be clear about your message. What are you saying and how are you saying it so that it can be clearly understood. People shouldn't have to guess what you're trying to say.

## **Concise**

Concise means sticking to the point and not rambling on and on. It also means not saying the same thing over and over again in the same or even in a different way.

## **Concrete**

When what you are saying is concrete, then people have a definite picture of what you're telling them. There are details (but not too many!) and you stick to the facts.

## **Correct**

This means that your communication fits with the person you are speaking with so that you are not assuming that they have knowledge about your topic if they don't. It also means that your communication is accurate and true.

## **Coherent**

When your communication is coherent, it is logical and easy to understand. . What you are saying is connected and relevant to the main topic and what you are saying flows easily.

## **Complete**

This means you are giving people all the information they need and that you have included all the details you need to.

## **Courteous**

This is friendly and polite communication where you are not being rude or putting anyone down. It's more than just saying please and thank you and is more about showing respect.

**Go back to your list of examples of how you have communicated and put a tick next to the examples that followed the 7c's.**

## After reading the 7 Cs of communication:

**Which of the 7 do you think you are reasonable good at?**

**Which do you think could be improved?**

**How could you go about improving that skill?**

**How would you know that you have improved?**

**How would your life be improved if you were a more skilful communicator?**



# Styles of Communication

Communication can be sorted into 3 different types.

## Aggressive Communication

This is forceful and often hostile communication that can seem quite unfriendly or rude. There are often lots of 'YOU' statements and blaming going on, including swearing and put downs. Non-verbals are bold movements, for example waving your arms around an often feel threatening.

## Passive Communication

This is where people find it hard to speak up or express their opinion and often speak in a quiet voice. They often agree to everything or find it hard to engage in the conversation. Non-verbals can include limited eye contact and very timid body language.

## Assertive Communication

Clearly expressing what you think and feel without being aggressive or demanding. It includes standing up for yourself without putting others down. Non-verbals include looking calm and in control - confident without being over confident.

**Assertive communication is the best way of communicating in order to:**

- Avoid or minimise conflict
- Maintain good relationships
- Express your thoughts and feeling so they are heard
- Increase your chances of getting what you want



**Draw or describe what each of the 3 communication styles might look like.**

Aggressive	Passive	Assertive

## Scenario

You finally have your L's and you just can't wait to get driving. You have been hanging out to get behind the wheel and have been hassling your Dad to take you for your first lesson.

You have been asking your Dad for a whole week now and every time, he just said "Later". Finally, he says "Alright Mate...Lets go!!!"

You grab the keys and head off to the car. You just settle in behind the wheel when Dad's mobile phone goes off. It is someone from your Dad's work. You hear him sounding pretty frustrated, and then he says, "I'll be right there". Sounds like the end of the driving lesson. You know Dad has been pretty stressed with work and also know that he's under heaps of pressure, but you really want to get driving.

**Read the scenario above, think about the 3 different communication types and fill in the table below**

<b>Describe:</b>	<b>What could be the consequences be?</b>
<b>An aggressive response</b>	
<b>A passive response</b>	
<b>An assertive response</b>	

**Which approach would most likely result in more driving lessons?**

# Expressing Opinions

You have the right to offer your opinion but you also have to respect others people’s right to be heard and offer their opinion too. Sometimes it is tricky to give your opinion about something when you know that there are people who disagree with you.

**Think about a time when you gave your opinion about something.**



How did you do this?

Did you find it easy or difficult?

Were you listened to?

# Having tough conversations

If there is an issue you need to talk about with someone – the longer you leave it, the harder it is to talk about. Good communication helps us have positive relationships with people. Tension and frustration can build up if we don't talk about the things that are bothering us. If we express ourselves through using good communication skills this helps us to have healthy relationships, avoid conflict and solve problems.



Here are some strategies from Reach Out to give you some tips...

## o Use I-statements

YOU statements can put people on the defensive and often lead to a hostile response. E.g. you always take his side over everything!

On the other hand, I-statements have the opposite effect. When we point the finger at ourselves (rather than the other person) and *avoid blaming them*, we usually get a more positive response. E.g. **I was hoping for some support with this.**

## o Express yourself clearly

Expecting people to mind-read and assuming that others know what you want can create all sorts of problems. When you *hint* rather than make a clear statement, people don't always get the message. Similarly, when you ramble on rather than state your thoughts clearly, people may not get the message. So, if there is something that you need to say it is helpful to tell it as it is - don't hint.

## o Do it now

If there is an issue you need to raise or a situation that needs to be resolved, try to deal with it as soon as possible. The longer you leave it, the harder it gets, and the more tension builds up.

The only exception to this rule is if you feel very angry, and you can't trust yourself to stay calm when you talk about it. In this situation, it's often a good idea to have a cooling off period before you raise the issue. Doing this prevents conflict and reduces the likelihood that you will say things that you will later regret. Sometimes you may need a day or two to cool down before you say what you need to say.

## o Acknowledge your discomfort

If you feel uncomfortable raising a particular issue, it can be helpful to let the other person know this, for example: 'Look Sam I feel really awkward about bringing this up but...' or 'Alex, I need to talk to you about something and I'm feeling nervous about it. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but if I don't say anything, I think I'll continue to feel upset.'

By honestly referring to your discomfort, you 'lower the temperature' and reduce the likelihood that the other person will become hostile or defensive.

## o Be aware of your body language

Check out what your non-verbals are saying. For example, if you fold your arms in front of your chest, have a stern expression on your face or speak in an accusing tone, the other person is likely to feel defensive even before they have heard what you have to say. On the other hand, an open posture, a calm voice, and relaxed body language help the other person to feel at ease, and your message is delivered in a non-threatening way.

## Don't forget that you have the right to:

- o Express your opinion
- o Say 'No'
- o Make mistakes
- o Change your mind
- o Disagree with others
- o Ask for what you want
- o Be treated with respect
- o Not take responsibility for other people's problems

<http://au.reachout.com/find/articles/communication-getting-the-message-across#>

**Have a go at acting out these different scenarios to practice having tough conversations.**

You have accidentally just run over your elderly neighbour's beloved cat and you need to go next door to tell her. You know that she is going to be devastated because that cat was her life.

You bought an i-phone at the electronic shop . After 3 weeks it stops working. The sales person is suggesting that you must have dropped it

You feel like your coach is always picking on you and blaming you for everything. He has now accused you of smashing the window in the club house, but you now it was actually someone else.

Your Mum has just told you that you can't go to your friend's party because you have to baby-sit your brother.



**In pairs, each takes a role from the scenarios on the previous page and practice assertive communication.**

At the end of the role play, ask the person you were “approaching” to give you feedback on how you went.

What did they say?

**Swap roles and redo the same scenario, now being on the other side of the conversation.**

How did it feel to be on the other side of the conversation?

How hard was it to communicate assertively?

Think of a scenario from your life that could benefit from assertive communication.

Plan out what you could say and practice this skill during the week.  
What could you say?



Reflection after the conversation:  
How did it go?



Are there any situation where being assertive is not the best option?





## Grievance Procedures

**Some times there are formal processes in place that can help you in tough situations or when you think there has been something unfair or wrong.**

Find out what grievance procedures are and collect grievance procedure policies from a variety of places. (Including in your current program!)

A grievance procedure is:

When might you need to follow a grievance procedure?



## Communication Reflection

Think back over this unit of work. What did you learn and what has changed for you?