Effective Workplace Communication

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Audience: Professionals of all levels and job types.

Training description

This Effective Workplace Communication course is designed to enhance participants' ability to communicate effectively with peers, clients, management, vendors, staff and others by expanding their knowledge of communication-based concepts, techniques and best practices. The program is highly practical: participants explore emotional intelligence, Social Styles, rapport, questioning, listening, speaking and email skills, then practise each one through role-plays, case work and real workplace examples. Day 1 focuses on understanding yourself and others; Day 2 on questioning, listening and delivering your message with impact.

Learning objectives

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:

1. Use emotional intelligence concepts to their professional advantage.
2. Use structured questioning techniques for fact-finding and other workplace-related discussions.
3. Apply structured listening techniques to gain a deeper understanding of problems and issues.
4. Maximize the value of personal and professional interactions.
5. Recognise the four Social Styles and VAK preferences, and adapt their communication to each.
6. Build rapport quickly and use body language deliberately.
7. Speak with authority and write clear, efficient emails.

Day 1: Understanding yourself and others

Module 1: Emotional intelligence and Merrill & Reid Social Styles

- 1.1 What emotional intelligence is and why it matters at work
- 1.2 Self-awareness and self-management: recognising your emotions and triggers, and staying composed under pressure
- 1.3 Social awareness and relationship management: reading others' emotions and needs, influencing and collaborating
- 1.4 The Social Styles model: assertiveness (asks vs tells) and responsiveness (controls vs emotes)
- 1.5 The four styles: Driver, Expressive, Analytical and Amiable
- 1.6 Identifying others' styles and flexing your own (versatility)
- ***Activity:*** *identify your style, then adapt one message for each of the four styles*

Module 2: Building rapport and VAK communications

- 2.1 First impressions: the first ten seconds
- 2.2 Barriers to building rapport: distraction, assumptions, mismatched style, poor timing, digital distance
- 2.3 Techniques that build rapport: using names, finding common ground, matching pace and tone, following through
- 2.4 Visual, auditory and kinesthetic (VAK) preferences and the language cues that signal them
- 2.5 Using VAK to your professional advantage: tailoring explanations, presentations and requests
- ***Activity:*** *rapid introductions, then rework a short explanation for visual, auditory and kinesthetic listeners*

Module 3: Body language

- 3.1 Using body language as a communication tool: posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expression, voice
- 3.2 Observing others: reading clusters of signals in context, not single cues
- 3.3 When others observe you: aligning your body language with your message
- 3.4 Body language on camera
- 3.5 Myths to avoid: over-reading isolated gestures and misusing the “7-38-55” statistic
- ***Activity:*** *observation exercise in pairs with feedback*

Day 2: Questioning, listening and communicating with impact

Module 4: Question types and usages

- 4.1 Closed questions: confirming facts and decisions
- 4.2 Open questions: exploring views, needs and context
- 4.3 High-yield questions: getting the most useful information from a single question
- 4.4 Question usages and purposes: accuracy, clarification, completeness, relevance, priority and next steps
- 4.5 Sequencing questions for fact-finding: funnelling from open to closed
- ***Activity:*** *fact-finding role-play using a structured question plan*

Module 5: Active listening, listening styles and the problem solving listening framework

- 5.1 Traditional active listening topology: attending, paraphrasing, clarifying, reflecting, summarising
- 5.2 Caring-based listening topology: empathy, acknowledging feelings, listening to the person, not only the problem
- 5.3 Listening styles: action-oriented, informational (content-oriented), people-oriented and time-oriented
- 5.4 Problem solving listening framework: person, topic, delivery and setting
- 5.5 Applying the framework to diagnose and resolve a workplace issue
- ***Activity:*** *listening triads (speaker, listener, observer) on a real workplace case*

Module 6: Speaking with authority and email communications

- 6.1 Tips and techniques to speak with authority: key point first, voice, pace and pauses
- 6.2 Removing credibility killers: fillers, hedging, rising intonation, over-apologising
- 6.3 Email as your written legacy: a lasting professional record
- 6.4 Tips when writing emails: clear subject lines, explicit asks and deadlines, tone, proofreading
- 6.5 Ways to enhance your email efficiency: inbox habits, templates, reply-all discipline, knowing when to call instead
- 6.6 Personal action plan: three habits to start applying at work
- ***Activity:*** *short authority talk, then rewrite one of your own emails; peer review*