

# Information Pack

## Unit 215

### Workplace Communication



## INTRODUCTION

This unit will help you to develop an understanding of communication as required by a practising or potential team leader or manager. Internal communication is the cornerstone of your organisation.

Communication is essential in day-to-day life, for an organisation to be successful organisations must understand the importance of using the correct communication channels to pass information on. This information pack introduces you to the challenges of workplace communication: key skills are examined that will enable you to confidently tackle this element of your role or future role as a manager.

The challenges will require you to consider theories that align with each topic but, importantly, you will be expected to make parallels with your own experience in the workplace, which will help in ensuring that you communicate effectively.

## GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

### Purpose

Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.

### Theory

Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.

### Example

The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.

### Question

Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.

### Challenge

You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.

### Video

Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

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## Effective Communication

Good communication matters at work because few jobs are done on our own. It takes communication to work on a team, and even people working alone must report to management. If you run a business, you must tell employees what is expected of them from the very start.

It may seem obvious that workplace communication must be effective, we know also know that communication can be difficult. We can (and will) identify a range of factors that can adversely impact on the effectiveness of communication both within the organisation and externally, along with exploring how these barriers can be to overcome. Later on in this pack we will discuss the impact of ineffective workplace communication can have.

Effective, honest communication can bring employees together and build successful teams. If the staff are talking with each other on the job, that's a major step towards building a good team. Employees who look forward to talking with their colleagues are more enthused about coming to work.

## Clear Communication

Confusing instructions and unclear guidelines are bad for all involved. That applies whether the communication is through meetings, instructions, performance reviews or employee handbooks. If workers understand their duties and responsibilities, everything flows more smoothly.

Effective communication is even more important if the workforce is diverse. With a mix of races, nationalities, genders or faiths on the job, it is easy for people to accidentally offend each other. If promotion and employee review rules are not clear, minority workers may feel they have been discriminated against.

Policies that clearly spell out how the company applies rewards and penalties can clear things up. Clear guidelines telling employees how to treat each other helps avoid unwanted conflict.

Bad communication causes all sorts of problems. Two employees receive conflicting instructions. HR issues a warning without finding out what the real issues are. A supervisor does not respond to questions or avoids discussing employee issues.

These are all examples of poor communication. Good communication skills can resolve the problems, or better yet prevent them from developing in the first place.

One of the best ways to keep your employees motivated is by making sure they are informed about important happenings within your organisation. In management you are required to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. What is for sure is that in organisations, managers that communicate well, do well!

## Defining Communication

To define what is meant by the word *communication*. The Concise Oxford Dictionary offers the following:

Communicate is to *'transmit or pass on by speaking or writing'*

Communication is *'the act of imparting, especially, news'*

This informs us that communication is about passing on information verbally and/or in writing. But is this conclusion enough? How many times have we been in the situation when a simple piece of communication has been misunderstood?

### Challenge

Think of 3 occasions when something you said to another person was misunderstood and another 3 occasions when you misunderstood what someone else said to you. List these in Column 1 and consider why the communication failed. Write down the reasons why the communication failed in Column 2.

Misunderstood Communication	Why the Communication Failed
1.	
2.	
3.	

Consider why communication failed, you may now have a better idea of the challenges that we face in communicating with others in the workplace! What should now be clear is that we are interested in effective communication.

One definition, cited in Hamilton, 2011:

*'Effective communication is when the message is received as the sender intended'*