

TEAMWORK

A. *EMPATHY* – recognise the feelings and perspectives of others.

1. Recognize that others may experience situations differently from oneself and use listening skills to identify the feelings and perspectives of others.
 2. Identify verbal, physical and situational cues that indicate how others may feel and describe them.
 3. Predict others' feelings and perspectives in a variety of situations analysing how one's behaviour may affect others.
 4. Analyse similarities and differences between one's own and others' perspectives and feelings, using conversation skills to understand the others' ones.
 5. Demonstrate how to express understanding of those who hold different opinions and express empathy for others.
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What is empathy?

Empathy is a basic interpersonal emotion which leads to effective communication. This involves putting oneself in someone else's shoes, or in other words, seeing the world from someone else's perspective. There is an important difference between empathy and sympathy. Empathy is about understanding what others are feeling because you have experienced it yourself or can put yourself in their shoes, but depending on the situations, you don't have to agree with that person. Sympathy, however, is acknowledging another person's emotional hardships and providing comfort and assurance.

Listening is an important part of empathy. When we actively listen, we understand what has been said and the implications of what hasn't been said. We pay attention not only to verbal language but to non verbal language as well.

Active listening is a skill which is not innate and, therefore, in many cases must be acquired. If we want to develop this skill, we must avoid the following situations:

- Go against others, give advice, impose your opinion
- Beat around the bush, change topics.
- Only focus on what we say and not measure the way we say things
- Take the words from other people's mouths
- Noisy places; background noise
- Don't be caught in a daze; day dreaming
- Interrupt when someone else is speaking.
- Don't fall for paternalism by providing comfort and assurance
- Emotionally charged language. This can lead to emotionally charged replies.
- Inappropriate humor.

Use this list to check if there is empathy within your conversational skills.

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B. *SELF-AWARENESS* – recognise individual and group similarities and differences.

1. Describe the ways that people are similar and different, identifying and describing positive qualities in others.
2. Identify differences and similarities of various social and cultural groups, demonstrating how to work effectively with those who are different from oneself.
3. Explain how individual, social and cultural differences may increase vulnerability to violence and discrimination episodes and identify ways to address it, analysing the effects of taking action to oppose it.
4. Analyse the origins and negative effects of stereotyping and prejudice, and demonstrate respect for individuals from different social and cultural groups.
5. Evaluate strategies for being respectful of others opposing stereotyping and prejudice, evaluating how this behaviour contributes to the common good.

We live in a society that pushes us to work with other people. Sometimes we think that we would be more efficient if we worked on our own. Don't forget the Chinese proverb: "If you want to go fast, walk alone. If you want to go far, walk together."

It's important not to forget what is involved in teamwork. It's not just fulfilling one's task. Teamwork is the process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal. Team spirit is demonstrated when the members of a team are committed to their tasks and work effectively. This means that people who form part of a team will try to cooperate, using their individual skills and providing constructive feedback, despite any personal conflict between individuals.

If you want to be a member of a team you should be aware that people are different; they have different backgrounds; different skills...

Think about the last time you were a member of a team,

- Did you agree on the objectives?
- What was your degree of commitment?
- What were your skills like?

If the people who form part of a team don't have the answers to these questions, the result will be that there will be different people with different approaches, if so, respect is the key:

- Split facts from opinions
- One fact can very well lead to different opinions.
- Respect the opinions of others and try to reach an agreement.

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C. *COMMUNICATION* – use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.

1. Identify ways to work and play well with others, demonstrating appropriate social and classroom behaviour.
2. Describe approaches for making and keeping friends and analyse ways to work effectively in groups.
3. Analyse ways to establish positive relationships with others demonstrating cooperation and teamwork to promote group effectiveness.
4. Evaluate the effects of requesting support from and providing support to others, appraising one's contribution in groups as a member and leader.
5. Evaluate the application of communication and social skills in daily interactions with peers, teachers and families, and use these skills to plan, implement and evaluate participation in a group project.

We constantly communicate throughout our lives. This even happens while we're dreaming because our subconscious communicates with us. Nevertheless, inner conversations don't only occur while you're dreaming; why don't you listen to yourself right now...what are you saying to yourself?

"It is kind of like when you are having a conversation with someone you've just met and suddenly the tiny angel and devil, who have opposite opinions, pop out of your mind".

Inner conversations form part of the whole communication process: the result of communicating with our inner self directly affects on how effectively we communicate with other people, especially when we're dealing with people who work together.

There are 2 principles which should be taken into account so that team members can communicate effectively:

1st Principle: Communication is more than just passing on information that contains a message. Within this message we also infer the feelings or the emotional state of the speaker through the tone in which the message is conveyed as well as the body language which the speaker uses. Hence, communication can be deemed as LANGUAGE; EMOTION and BODY.

A) Analyze the way you speak, such as tone of voice, posture, and even the grammar and vocabulary you use.



Our body language may be saying one thing whereas or tone of voice may be saying something else. This is because 73% of communication is carried out non-verbally.

You should focus on using the right volume and tone of voice.

It's a good idea if you let someone who is close to you tell you what kind of message you convey with your body language and tone of voice. By allowing someone express their opinion about the way you do something, you can also work on the way that you allow constructive criticism to sink in.

B) We all communicate differently. There are people who cut to the chase whereas others tend to beat around the bush. Therefore, it will result very helpful if try getting into the speaker's shoes and understand their way of communicating.

C) Be aware of your emotional state when you are about to speak, if you're angry in the moment of speaking, this anger will be very easily be reflect in your message.

D) Be aware of the way you use your hands and make eye contact. In many occasions, speakers are so focused on the message that they become totally unaware of their body language. Body language is key to effective communication.

E) When it comes to speaking, bear in mind the tempo of your speech.

2nd Principle: Communicating means Listening

Try out this experiment with two friends of yours. Describe what your house is like to them so that they can describe your description on a piece of paper. They can't copy each other. Each one of them will make a drawing according to what they have understood after listening to you. What do you think the final outcome would be? Chances are that both house will look totally different and will have little in common with your actual house.

This is a short way of explaining what happens when we communicate. Listening is key to communication.

Effective communication entails effective listening skills. Here are four tips to help you in the art of "true listening" to help make sure that what you have listened to actually meets what the speaker is trying to communicate:

1. Techniques for Active Listening

Ask and check if the message has been or is in the process of being conveyed.

When it comes to understanding what the speaker is trying to point out, making questions can become helpful. Generally speaking, there are two types of questions: open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended questions require more than one word answers, whereas closed questions can be answered with only a "yes" or a "no".

Choose 6 closed questions and come up with an answer, being conscious of the difference between open and closed questioning techniques:

- Are you feeling better today?
- May I use the bathroom?
- Is the prime rib a special tonight?
- Should I date him?
- Will you please do me a favor?
- Have you already completed your homework?
- Is that your final answer?
- Were you planning on becoming a fireman?
- Should I call her and sort things out?
- Is it wrong to want to live on my own at this age?
- Shall we make dinner together tonight?
- Could I possibly be a messier house guest?
- Might I be of service to you ladies this evening?
- Did that man walk by the house before?

- Can I help you with that?
- May I please have a bite of that pie?
- Would you like to go to the movies tonight?
- Is math your favorite subject?
- Does four plus four equal eight?
- Is that haunted house really scary?
- Will you be going to Grandmother's house for Christmas?
- Did Dad make the cake today?
- Is there a Mass being held at noon?
- Are you pregnant?
- Are you happy?
- Is he dead?

Now choose 6 open-ended questions.

- What were the most important wars fought in the history of the Europe?
- What are you planning to buy today at the supermarket?
- How exactly did the fight between the two of you start?
- What is your favorite memory from childhood?
- How will you help the company if you are hired to work for us?
- What do you plan to do immediately following graduation from college?
- What types of decorations do you plan to have for your friend's birthday party?
- What was your high school experience like?
- How did you and your best friend meet?
- What sites do you expect to see on your vacation?
- How do you go about booking tickets for a flight?
- What were the major effects of World War II for the United States?
- How do you go about purchasing a home?
- What is it like to live in the capital of Morocco?
- What is the quickest way to get to the pet store in town?
- Why is it that every time I talk with you, you seem irritated?
- In what way do you feel I should present myself?
- How do you manage to raise those children alone?
- What is the matter with the people in that class?
- Where are you going to find the time to write all those letters?
- Why can't I come along with you?
- What makes the leaves change color?

2. Paraphrasing Techniques

A **paraphrase** is a restatement of the meaning of a text or passage using other words. Paraphrasing goes to show that you have understood what you have heard. Some examples can be:

- ✓ Alright, so what I have understood is that...
- ✓ So you mean....Am I right?
- ✓ According to what you're saying...
- ✓ What I understand from your question is...

3. Reformulation Technique

Reformulation is a paraphrasing method which helps transform the negative connotations of a statement into positive ones.

Example: Our classmate is hopeless, you can't pass this subject doing things that way.

Reformulation: What can your classmate do to improve in this subject?

4. Approval Technique

By approving the message conveyed by the speaker, we are acknowledging the speaker's point of view. This is a good way to show people that you're interested in the conversation even if you may not happen to agree.

Here are some examples:

- ✓ I see this is very important to you...
- ✓ That's a new way of seeing it.
- ✓ Good question
- ✓ You've just mentioned something really important...

TEAMWORK

D. *CONFLICTS* – demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

1. Identify problems and conflicts commonly experienced by peers detecting approaches to resolve them constructively.
2. Describe causes and consequences of conflicts applying constructive approaches in resolving them.
3. Define unhealthy peer pressure and evaluate strategies for resisting it, preventing and resolving interpersonal problems.
4. Analyse how conflict-resolution skills and listening and talking accurately help in resolving conflicts and contribute to work within a group.
5. Evaluate current conflict-resolution skills and the effects of using negotiation skills, plan how to improve them and use them to reach win-win solutions.

What words do you associate with CONFLICT?

We can define the word CONFLICT in many ways. One association can be focusing on the result of this word: CONFLICT equals one winner; one way out. On the other hand, CONFLICT can also refer to a situation from which we can find the opportunity to improve. Depending on our interpretation, we will face a conflictive situation one way or another. Hence, the importance of a paradigm shift (move from using one model of thinking to a completely different way of thinking).

Conflicts form part of our human condition. They arise from differences between people, but they don't necessarily have to be bad or good. We have the power to choose whether this condition should be positive or negative.

We should view conflict in a positive way; view conflict situations as an opportunity for personal and organizational growth.

A positive approach towards conflict resolution is acknowledging that different perceptions do exist on any given issue.

Conflict situations normally arise because one party attributes the wrong intentions to the other party. There is typically a great deal of slippage between intentions and behavior, so behavior does not always accurately reflect a person's intentions

Conflicting views give you a chance to learn more about yourself, explore views of others, and develop productive relationships. Clear and open communication is the cornerstone of successful conflict resolution.

Step one: Everyone involved in conflict situations should agree on how to approach the conflict.

Possibility a: There can only be one winner. The group should accept that only one party can win.

Possibility b: No winner or loser but the emphasis is on a group solution.

Step two: When addressing conflict situations try separating facts from emotions. In many occasions conflict resolution implies dealing with anger. When anger is directed at you, it is much more difficult to respond definitively, because your own emotions are usually involved. You can find further help in the chapter which deals with emotions.

Step three: The most important step of all, everyone involved in the conflict should actively take part in the resolution. All parties should share their views so that everyone can feel that they have won something. By resolving conflicts, relationships and teamwork should improve.