

Effective Communication Reflection Worksheet

Effective communication does not have to be complicated. Indeed, the following list contains basic guidance regarding verbal and non-verbal communication that we can use in any situation.

Ask members of the group to review each tip/technique, and then complete the form below to understand how effectively they can be implemented:

- **Maintain eye contact** – the speaker needs to know that the listener is attending to what is said. At the same time, the listener wants to see that the speaker is engaged in what they are saying to their audience.
- **Maintain appropriate body language** – take into account whether non-verbal techniques could confuse or negate the message. For example, head shaking, nodding, smiling, leaning forward, leaning back, and how you are sitting or standing while you talk may change the tone and even the content of the message.
- **Use people names** – where a group is small enough, using someone's name can begin and maintain rapport while reinforcing a sense of belonging.
- **One person speaking at a time** – this can be supported by using a 'talking stick' (only the person in possession can talk) or reaching an agreement in advance to not interrupt or talk over one another.
- **Use of personal pronouns** – when feelings or beliefs are being discussed, try and use "I" and "we" to make them personal to the speaker.
- **Address group issues early** – where a problem has arisen that may affect communication, address as early as possible.
- **First, seek to understand and then to be understood** – listen to what is being said and ask questions to remove uncertainty. Only then put forward your views or answers.
- **Ask open-ended questions** – use questions that allow the other person to open up and explain what they are trying to communicate.
- **Be honest** – we are highly developed at detecting when someone is less than truthful, be open and honest in what you say, and be more likely to reciprocate.
- **Use appropriate language** – speak in a way that the listener can understand. Using technical jargon to someone with a different background will lead to confusion and detachment.

Reflection Exercise

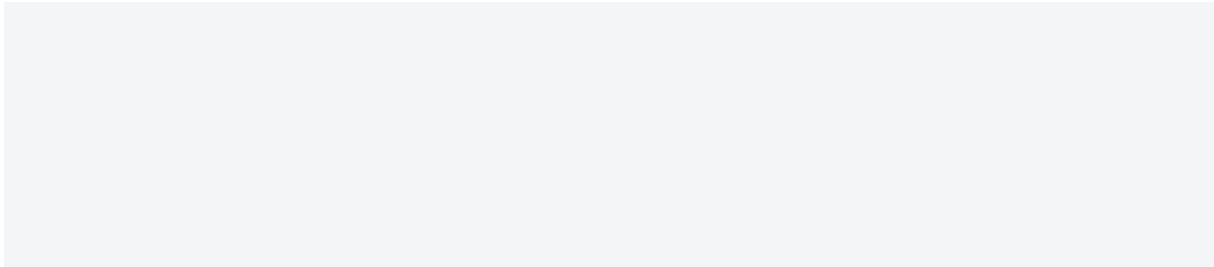
Which of the above techniques is most challenging to implement, and why?

What does your group currently do well to ensure effective communication?

What do you think your group could do better to promote effective communication?

In terms of your interaction with the group, what verbal/non-verbal techniques do you feel you should work on?

How might a group agreement be reached on effective communication? And how might it encourage group members?



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