



## BUILDING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



**Communication skills are vital for success in any workplace, especially for interns. Effective communication allows you to build relationships, understand expectations, and navigate challenges effectively.**

### **The importance of communication skills:**

- Building strong relationships: Clear communication fosters trust and rapport, making it easier to collaborate with colleagues, seek guidance, and contribute to team projects.
- Understanding expectations: Open and transparent communication ensures you understand your role, responsibilities, and goals, leading to better performance and productivity.
- Overcoming challenges: Effective communication helps you address conflicts constructively, provide and receive feedback, and navigate complex situations with professionalism and empathy.

### **Communicating with managers and colleagues**

**Building effective communication with your manager and colleagues is essential for success. Clear and respectful communication fosters a positive work environment and facilitates collaboration.**

- Professionalism: Maintain a professional tone and manner when communicating with managers and colleagues. Use appropriate language and avoid slang or informal expressions.
- Clear and concise: Communicate your ideas clearly and concisely. Avoid unnecessary jargon or technical terms. Use bullet points or short paragraphs for easier understanding.
- Respectful communication: Always be respectful in your communication, even when disagreeing. Acknowledge different perspectives and strive for a collaborative approach.
- Active participation: Engage actively in meetings and discussions. Share your ideas, ask questions, and be open to learning from others.

### **Navigating difficult conversations**

**Difficult conversations can be challenging but are an inevitable part of the workplace. Learning to handle these situations effectively is crucial for maintaining positive relationships and resolving issues.**

- Choose the right time and place: Find a private and calm setting to have the conversation. Ensure both parties are prepared to discuss the issue openly and honestly.
- Focus on the issue: Stay focused on the specific issue at hand. Avoid bringing up unrelated matters or personal attacks. Keep the conversation professional and constructive.
- Active listening and empathy: Listen actively to understand the other person's perspective. Show empathy and try to see the situation from their point of view. This can help de-escalate tension.
- Find common ground: Look for common ground and areas where you can agree. Focus on finding solutions that work for everyone involved. A collaborative approach can help resolve conflicts more effectively.

### **Utilising digital communication tools**

**In today's workplace, digital communication tools play a crucial role in staying connected and collaborating efficiently. Mastering these tools is essential for effective communication.**

- Email etiquette: Use professional email etiquette. Subject lines should be clear and concise. Proofread emails for errors and ensure your tone is appropriate for the recipient.
- Instant messaging: Use instant messaging tools like Teams for quick and informal communication. Be mindful of using emojis and shorthand, as these may not always be appropriate for professional communication.
- Video conferencing: Participate actively in video conferences. Ensure your background is professional and your camera angle is flattering. Listen attentively and contribute to the discussion.

### **Applying communication strategies**

**By consistently applying these communication strategies, you can effectively build relationships, navigate challenges, and thrive in your internship. Remember that communication is a skill that takes practice, so be patient with yourself and continue to learn and grow.**

- Practice makes perfect: The more you practice effective communication, the more comfortable and confident you will become. Take every opportunity to apply these strategies to your daily interactions.
- Be open to learning: Communication is an ongoing process. Stay open to learning new strategies and adapting to different communication styles. Continuously seek opportunities to improve your communication skills.

**For more info or assistance, kindly contact your Employee Wellness Practitioner at [wellness@hsrc.ac.za](mailto:wellness@hsrc.ac.za) - Alternatively, contact our external service provider, Lyra South Africa, on Toll-free: 0800 597 272/ Email: [callback@icas.co.za](mailto:callback@icas.co.za)**