

Session Title: Communication & Intentional Listening

Topic Discussion

This session will provide participants strategies for interpersonal communication and professional communication using social emotional learning. Communication is typically the highest in-demand skill for leadership positions at all levels.

Learning Outcomes

- Learners will:
- Identify and apply principles of effective verbal communication
- Practice active empathetic listening skills
- Reflect on the impact of digital devices on interpersonal communication

Discussion Questions

- What are the characteristics of empathetic listening?
- What factors might be a barrier in your communication with others?
- How can improving your communication enhance your customer service and collaborative interactions?
- From whom can you get honest feedback regarding your communication style and potential growth areas?
- What is one tactic to increase your listening potential?

Session Outline

Workshop Duration: 90 minutes

Workshop Agenda:

(1) Introduction and Setting the Stage (10 minutes)

- Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)
- Overview of the session: Briefly introduce the importance of communication, especially for leadership roles, where it is typically the highest in-demand skill.
- Review of Learning Outcomes: Clearly state what participants will learn and be able to do by the end of the session.

(2) Exploring Effective Verbal Communication (20 minutes)

- Principles of Effective Verbal Communication (10 minutes): Discuss key elements: clarity, conciseness, tone, and appropriate language.
- Brief Activity/Discussion (10 minutes): Engage participants in a short activity or discussion related to the challenges and successes of verbal communication that they have experienced or observed.

(3) Deep Dive into Active Empathetic Listening (30 minutes)

- Defining Active Empathetic Listening (5 minutes): Explain what active empathetic listening entails.
- Characteristics of Empathetic Listening (10 minutes): Facilitate a discussion or present information on the characteristics of empathetic listening, drawing upon the discussion question: "**What are the characteristics of empathetic listening?**".
- Practice Active Listening (15 minutes): Implement a pair-share activity where participants practice active listening skills and provide brief feedback. Encourage them to identify "**one tactic to increase your listening potential**".

(4) Identifying Communication Barriers and Enhancement Strategies (20 minutes)

- Barriers to Communication (10 minutes): Engage participants in brainstorming or discuss "**What factors might be a barrier in your communication with others?**". This can include personal biases, assumptions, distractions (including digital devices as per the learning outcome), and cultural differences.

- Enhancing Communication for Better Outcomes (10 minutes): Discuss "**How can improving your communication enhance your customer service and collaborative interactions?**". Explore strategies for overcoming identified barriers. Briefly reflect on the impact of digital devices on face-to-face communication.

(5) Seeking Feedback and Continuous Growth (5 minutes)

- The Importance of Feedback (3 minutes): Discuss why seeking feedback is crucial for communication development.
- Identifying Feedback Sources (2 minutes): Prompt participants to consider "**From whom can you get honest feedback regarding your communication style and potential growth areas?**".

(6) Conclusion and Action Planning (5 minutes)

- Summary of Key Takeaways: Briefly recap the main points covered.
- Encourage participants to reflect on their current communication style and identify one or two actionable steps they can take to improve based on what they learned.