Program Support Notes

Aged Care: Communication with Colleagues

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Suitable for:

Aged Care Training

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Aged Care: Communication with Colleagues

For Teachers:

Introduction

In any workplace, communication with colleagues and co-workers is critical. In the aged care sector, the ability to deliver quality care to clients, particularly in a residential setting, relies on effective teamwork among all staff. Integral to a group of individuals being able to function as a team, is communication.

Communication - both verbal and non-verbal - takes various forms. In all cases, there is a vital need to convey information accurately and in such a manner that it is readily understood.

This program looks at communication with colleagues and co-workers in the aged care sector, and deals with a number of aspects of communication which are relevant to the work of professional carers, including managers, medical and nursing staff and support staff. It looks at the importance of effective communication in the workplace, verbal and non-verbal communication, written communication, formal and informal communication and problem-solving with communication.

Program Timeline

00:00:00 Introduction
00:01:16 Chapter 1 – The importance of effective communication in the workplace
00:04:10 Summary – The importance of effective communication in the workplace
00:04:53 Chapter 2 – Verbal and non-verbal communication
00:09:57 Summary – Verbal and non-verbal communication
00:10:49 Chapter 3 – Written Communication
00:13:17 Summary – Written Communication
00:13:57 Chapter 4 – Formal and informal communication
00:18:34 Summary – Formal and informal communication
00:19:22 Chapter 5 – Solving problems with communication
00:22:50 Summary – Solving problems with communication
00:23:38 Conclusion
00:24:01 Credits

Other Relevant Programs available from VEA

Aged Care: Communicating with Aged Care Residents
Aged Care: Effective Wound Management
Eliminating Bullying and Harassment from the Aged Care Workplace
Protecting the Vulnerable - Identifying and Reporting Elder Abuse
Understanding and Managing Type 2 Diabetes

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Student Worksheet:

Before Viewing the Program

1. Consider a typical day in the life of a worker in the aged care sector. It could be someone who works in any relevant role, including managers, support staff, nursing staff, kitchen and catering staff or volunteers. Identify all the different ways in which that person might be involved in communicating with colleagues and co-workers.

2. Think of an instance in which you have been involved, where:
   a) communication with one or more colleagues and co-workers has been highly effective; and
   b) where such communication has been ineffective.

   What was it about the communication that made it effective; and ineffective? In what ways were outcomes enhanced by effective communication, and in what ways were they impeded by ineffective communication?

3. What is the difference between formal and informal communication in your workplace? Provide some examples of each.

4. What makes a great communicator?

5. Identify some examples of non-verbal communication. How important do you think non-verbal communication is?
   a) in general;
   b) specifically relating to your workplace?
While Viewing the Program

1. What three things are said to influence a person's communication style?

2. Communication in the workplace takes different forms according to its purpose. For instance, what is the difference between, say, giving instructions and participating in a meeting?

3. What is suggested are the outcomes of effective communication in the workplace?

4. What is suggested are the outcomes of poor and ineffective communication in the workplace?

5. Define verbal communication.

6. What is paralanguage?

7. What characterises an appropriate tone when verbally communicating in the workplace?

8. What is empathy and why is it important?
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9. Active listening is crucial for effective communication. Give some examples of active listening techniques.

10. Assertiveness includes the use of ‘I’ statements. Give two examples of ‘I’ statements.

11. What are some elements of paralanguage and non-verbal language that may vary between cultures?

12. Give some examples of types of written communication in the workplace.

13. What should characterise the content of written workplace communication?

14. Other than the actual words used, what aspects of written communication send messages to the reader?
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15. What purposes does a meeting agenda serve for formal meetings?

16. How is informal communication different from formal communication in the workplace?

17. Complete the sentence. The encouraging of questions, contributions and input from others is known as

18. What is negotiation and what does it involve?

19. In conflict resolution, what purpose does active listening serve?

20. What are two other methods of resolving conflict if negotiation is unsuccessful?
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After Viewing the Program

1. Evaluate the policies of your workplace relating to conflict resolution between colleagues. What processes are in place? How effective are they, and how could they be improved?

2. How effective is communication within your workplace? What are the various forms of formal and informal communication occurring there? Are they adequate? How could they be improved?

3. In what ways can your own communication improve within the workplace?
Suggested Responses

While Viewing the Program

1. What three things are said to influence a person's communication style?
   Personality, experience and cultural background.

2. Communication in the workplace takes different forms according to its purpose. For instance, what is the difference between, say, giving instructions and participating in a meeting?
   Instructions are intended to specifically train and guide, whereas meetings allow an exchange of information for the purpose of reaching consensus.

3. What are the suggested outcomes of effective communication in the workplace?
   Effective communication results in positive outcomes, such as greater productivity and efficiency, stronger relationships and improved workplace morale.

4. What are the suggested outcomes of poor and ineffective communication in the workplace?
   Poor and ineffective communication creates conflict, consumes time and resources and ultimately negatively impacts on the organisation as a whole.

5. Define verbal communication.
   Verbal communication refers to the exchange of information involving speech.

6. What is paralanguage?
   Paralanguage refers to the way the words are delivered in volume, pitch, tone and rate.

7. What characterises an appropriate tone when verbally communicating in the workplace?
   An appropriate tone conveys sincerity, confidence and respect for the listener.

8. What is empathy and why is it important?
   Empathy involves understanding another person’s experience from their perspective, rather than from your own perspective, and being able to convey this understanding to them. Empathy is a vital tool in establishing rapport and building feelings of trust.

9. Active listening is crucial for effective communication. Give some examples of active listening techniques.
   Active listening includes: asking questions to clarify meaning; paraphrasing – by stating the message in a shortened version using different words; reflecting the information back; and summarising the message.

10. Assertiveness includes the use of ‘I’ statements. Give two examples of ‘I’ statements.
    Answers will vary

11. What are some elements of paralanguage and non-verbal language that may vary between cultures?
    They include the volume, rate and quality of speech, the type of gestures, the amount of eye contact and the degree of personal space between people.

12. Give some examples of types of written communication in the workplace.
    Types of written communication include emails, letters, written instructions, reports, memos, agendas and meeting minutes.

13. What should characterise the content of written workplace communication?
    Written communication should be concise, have clarity, ensure accuracy, proceed in a logical order, and have focus and purpose.
14. Other than the actual words used, what aspects of written communication send messages to the reader?
   
   In written communication the paper used, the document’s formatting, spelling and punctuation - all send non-verbal messages to the reader.

15. What purposes does a meeting agenda serve for formal meetings?
   
   In formal meetings, an agenda sets out in advance the issues to be discussed, the chairperson leads and mediates discussion and individuals in the meeting speak in turn. Minutes are documented which summarise the proceedings and outcomes.

16. How is informal communication different from formal communication in the workplace?
   
   Informal communication occurs in more casual settings where interaction is not monitored or documented and individuals are not as accountable.

17. The encouraging of questions, contributions and input from others is known as
   
   Feedback

18. What is negotiation and what does it involve?
   
   Negotiation is the process of resolving conflict directly between opposing groups or individuals. It involves forming agreements and arriving at outcomes that fulfil the needs of all parties involved.

19. In conflict resolution, what purpose does active listening serve?
   
   The purpose of active listening is to clarify understanding, reflecting, rephrasing and summarising, which enables parties to understand each other’s needs and facilitates the development of empathy.

20. What are two other methods of resolving conflict if negotiation is unsuccessful?
   
   Mediation - where an impartial third party intervenes to facilitate an agreement; and arbitration - where opposing parties present their cases and an arbitrator decides on an outcome.