

Career
Life
Work

Communication Skills

Instructional Resource

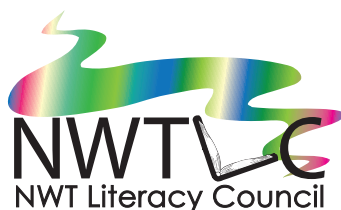
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There are 10 manuals and workbooks in the *Career – Life – Work* series. You will find a list of them on the last page of this manual. You can find the whole series online at www.nwt.literacy.ca under the adult resources section. If you would like print copies, please contact the NWT Literacy Council.



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Introduction

Despite the Northwest Territories' strong economy and low unemployment rate, some workers continue to have difficulty obtaining or maintaining employment. According to researchers, one of the primary reasons is that they lack *soft skills*. Soft skills are non-technical skills, abilities, and traits like communication skills and working well with others. People need these skills to function in a specific employment environment.

Studies reveal that a majority of entry-level jobs require these types of social and interpersonal skills: employers rank communication skills as the number one skill they want in an employee. Communication is really at the heart of doing a good job at work.

Communication encompasses speaking, listening, oral presentations, working together as a team and dealing with conflict. This section of our *Career – Life – Work* series incorporates these skills by using both personal and work related examples and situations.

Developing communication skills is not an easy task. We sometimes have to unlearn certain behaviours we have been taught as children. But we can learn these skills with lots of practice and patience. This section has the following topics:

1. **Communicating with Others:** what is communication, communication quiz, body language, communication at work, assertive behaviour versus passive or aggressive behaviour
2. **Active Listening:** listening to instructions, good listening techniques, practice and improving your active listening skills
3. **Oral Presentations:** public speaking, oral speaking self-assessment, oral presentations, PowerPoint presentations, digital storytelling

4. **Working with Others:** good team members, personality types, working with others self-assessment, working with others in work situations, fun team building activities
5. **Dealing with Conflict:** definition of conflict, why do we have conflict, conflict management, working through conflict, conflict at work

This is an instructional resource with handouts for learners to support the Career-Life -Work curriculum at the 120 level. There are a lot of activities in each section. You do not need to do them all. Choose the ones that would be best for your learners.

We have also developed two workbooks to go with this section called

- *Soft Skills for Work* (personal qualities, communication skills, working with others, problem solving skills)
- *Dealing with Conflict*

You can use these workbooks with this section or as stand-alone units. The workbooks have many of the same activities as in the manuals. Look for them on the NWT Literacy Council's website at www.nwt.literacy.ca if you do not have print copies.



Shows instructor notes and activities for each topic



Shows learner handouts for each activity. Copy enough handouts before you start the activity.



Communicating with Others **Learning Activity 1**

8 Handouts

1.1: Two truths and one lie

The instructor stands up and briefly describes three life experiences he or she has had. Two are true and one is a lie. After you share these three stories, learners vote on which one is a lie.

Learners try to decide which is a lie, using both nonverbal clues and what they already know about the person. Everyone is polled and each person votes on the one they think is a lie. Each person takes a turn.

When you are finished, ask learners how they deciphered the lie. What did they look and listen for?

1-2: What is Communication?

Many people think that communicating is about talking to one another.

Although speaking is one component of communication it is probably not the most important. Ask learners what are other components of communication.

(Possible answers: listening, body language, reading, writing, texting, emailing, Facebook, etc.)

Next ask learners to come up with a definition for communication. They can do this in groups or on their own.

“Communication is a process (either verbal or non-verbal) of sharing information with another person in such a way that he or she understands what you are saying.” (Dr. H. Norman Writing)

1-3: Communication Charades (handout)

Cut out the slips of paper on the handout. Put them in a hat. Form two teams with learners. Tell learners that they are going to play communication charades. They must act out the facial expression or gesture of the word or phrase on the slip of paper. Do an example with them – act out “bored.” Each team will get 45 seconds to guess and if they don’t get it the other team gets one chance to say what it is. Give each team eight turns or as many turns as there are people on each team. Give one point for a correct guess.

Next, discuss this statement: “The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn’t being said.” What does this statement mean?

One of the most important ways we communicate is through body language or non-verbal communication. The way we sit in a chair, fold our arms, turn our body or focus our eyes will do more to tell another what we are thinking than the words we use to express ourselves.

Tell learners that communication is:

- 55% through body movements.
- 38% vocal (pitch and volume).
- 7% verbal (words we use).

Does this surprise anyone?

Ask learners to brainstorm the different forms of non-verbal communication.

- Tone of voice
- Eye contact (However, in some cultures eye contact is considered rude or intimidating.)
- Facial expression
- Body orientation, posture, and use of space
- Hand and arm gestures
- Use of attentive silence

1.4: Role Plays (handout)

First play a simple game of charades using different feelings such as nervous, bored, tired, frustrated, happy, interested, sad, angry, tense, etc. Write these words on small slips of paper and put them in a hat or bowl. Learners pick one out and act it out without using words. Other learners try and guess what feeling the person is portraying. (Play this if you have not played communication charades from the previous activity).

Next ask learners to get into pairs and choose one or two role plays on the handout. Give them time to practice their role plays before they perform in front of the class. Discuss each role play.

1.5: Why is Reading Body Language Important? (handout)

Why is reading body language so important? Read the following scenario out to the class.

Scenario

You go into your boss's office to ask for a raise, but she has a scowl on her face and barely looks up when you enter her office. Maybe this is not a good time to ask for a raise. In fact, it might even be harmful to your goal.

- What kind of reaction is likely if we ask for a raise anyway?
- What might happen if we decide to offer help by saying, "Is there anything that I can help you with?"
- Can you think of a situation where you were able to read the body language of someone? What did you do? How did it change your approach to this person?

Learners read the handout in pairs and discuss and write down the possible messages that are being sent.

1.6: Test Your Communication Skills (handout)

Ask learners to take the quiz on the handout to test their communication skills.

1.7: Importance of Clear Communication (handout)

Stand at the front of the room and ask learners to give you specific instructions for making a peanut butter and jam sandwich. Be careful to do exactly what they instruct you to do. For example, if a learner says “Put peanut butter on one side of the bread,” do nothing until the student says something like “Open the peanut butter jar. Pick up a table knife in the hand you usually use.” You could then put peanut butter only on the outside edge of the bread. The key to this activity is to do exactly what the learners tell you to do. Discuss the exercise using these questions:

1. What types of instructions were you giving me?
2. What types of instructions worked best?
3. What type of instructions did not work?
4. What would have worked better?
5. What was it about the instructions that worked well?

Ask learners to work in small groups to identify four occupations or jobs in the community that require particularly good communication skills. Ask them to discuss the kind of problem that might arise as a result of poor communication skills.

Go over the four important factors in communicating a message:

1. **Why and how?** Why and how do people communicate? For example: in-person, on the phone, in meetings, through emails, face-to-face, etc.
2. **Information?** What information needs to be communicated? For example: meeting times, budget information, confidential information, etc.

3. **Who?** Who are people communicating with and what are the circumstances?
For example: to a supervisor, co-worker, manager, team, meetings, patient, etc.
4. **Risk of Failure:** What are the consequences of communication failure? For example: low-risk, potential money losses, or “life or death”.

Learners, in groups, read one scenario on the handout and decide on how the message will be delivered using the four important factors for communicating a message.

1.8: Communication at Work (handout)

Give out the handout and ask learners to decide if each statement illustrates good or poor communication skills. Change the statement to reflect good communication skills.

1.9: Being Assertive (handout)

Assertiveness is standing up for your rights while respecting the rights of others. For example if you are bothered by someone’s smoking, you can ask them to stop. Can you do it in a polite way? Being assertive can sometimes be hard especially if we were brought up to never speak up for ourselves.

Take the Assertiveness Quiz at

<http://www.thewclc.ca/edge/issue6/AssertiveQuiz/AssertiveQuiz.html> to see how assertive you are. You can also do the quiz on the handout. Learners can share their results with others in the class. Ask them how they think they can be more assertive.

1.10: Assertive, Passive, or Aggressive? (handout)

What does it look like to be assertive? The handout shows some common scenarios, with examples of each style of behavior. Read over the example scenarios together as a class. Ask learners to break into four groups. Each group

can take one scenario and come up with an assertive, passive and aggressive response for each situation. Each group reads their scenario and shares their responses with others in the class. You could also do this as a role play.

At the end of the class, ask learners how they can be more assertive. Ask them to come up with one action plan for themselves.



Communicating with Others Learning Activity 1.3

Communication Charades

Tired	Everything's okay
Angry	Come on
Pleased	Stop
Sad	That's enough
Confused	Tell me more
Interested	Wait a minute
Sorry	Go away
Excited	No way

Guilty	Tense
Shocked	Frustrated
Nervous	Happy



Communicating with Others

Learning Activity 1.4

Role Plays

1. Mother faces her child with arms crossed and eyes glaring while saying, "You're such a sweet child."
2. Applicant sits slumped in a chair with eyes on the floor and whispers that he is really interested in the job.
3. Grandmother hugs her grandchild while saying, "I love you!"
4. Student sits in class and doodles with a glassy-eyed stare. The teacher asks her why she is not paying attention and she replies, "I am paying attention."
5. Santa looks at the little girl on his lap and says without a smile, "So, tell me again what you wanted for Christmas."
6. Mary's husband continues to watch the hockey game on TV while saying "Sure, honey, let's talk."
7. Applicant approaches the job interviewer with a big smile and a firm handshake and looks directly into her eyes and says, "I'm so happy to meet you."
8. A friend, near tears, says, "Oh don't worry about it."



Communicating with Others Learning Activity 1.5

Non-verbal Communication¹

In the following work situations, what possible messages are being sent?

1. A customer approaches the counter where you are standing. You greet the customer by smiling and saying, “Good morning.” The customer does not look at you or respond to your greeting.

2. As you approach a table of two in your restaurant, you notice one of the customers looking at his watch. His movements appear hurried and he is talking very quickly.

3. You greet your boss and she smiles back at you.

¹ Ready to Work North Workbook (p.137)

4. You ask a customer how her meal was and she says, "OK," with a strange look on her face.

5. Four customers are sitting at the bar laughing and talking loudly.

6. You come in late for work and you say hello to your boss. He grunts a quick greeting and then returns to his work.

7. You forgot to turn off a valve at work. Your co-worker comes in and turns off the valve and then grins and shrugs his shoulders.



Communicating with Others Learning Activity 1.6

Test Your Communication Skills²

	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. I can detect the mood of others by looking at them when we talk.			
2. I can tell when someone doesn't understand what I am saying.			
3. I am able to discuss issues without getting upset.			
4. I find it easy to understand someone else's point of view.			
5. When talking to people, I pay attention to their body language.			
6. When I am angry, I admit it.			
7. I express my ideas clearly.			
8. I change the way I talk depending on who I'm speaking to.			
9. I express my opinions even if others do not agree.			

² http://www.queendom.com/queendom_tests/transfer

10. I can talk about my feelings.			
11. When I know what someone is going to say I finish the sentence for them.			
12. I have difficulty putting my thoughts into words.			
13. I fidget while listening to someone talk.			
14. People don't understand what I am talking about.			
15. I find it hard to express my feelings to others.			
16. People tend to misinterpret what I say.			
17. I have to repeat myself often because people don't understand what I am saying the first time.			
18. I find it difficult to understand someone when they have a different point of view from me.			
19. If I have something relevant to add, I'll interrupt someone to make certain my views are heard.			
20. When other people become emotional around me, I'm not sure how to react.			
21. If I find a conversation boring, I'll let my mind drift away.			

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22. I will stop a speaker in mid-sentence if I disagree with a statement he or she has made.			
23. People complain that I don't appear to be listening when they speak to me.			
24. I tend to do most of the talking in conversations.			
25. I find myself struggling to find the right words to express myself.			

Calculate your score!

Questions 1 - 10

3 points for Often _____

2 points for Sometimes _____

0 points for Never _____

Total A _____

Questions 11- 25

0 points for Often _____

2 points for Sometimes _____

3 points for Never _____

Total B _____

Total A _____ plus Total B _____ = _____

50 - 75: You are an excellent communicator!

25 - 50: You have fairly good communication skills but still need some help.

0-25: You need some help with your communication skills!



Communicating with Others

Learning Activity 1.7

Importance of Clear Communication³

There are four important factors in communicating a message:

1. **Why and how?** Why and how do people communicate? For example: in-person, on the phone, in meetings, through emails, face-to-face, etc.
2. **Information?** What information needs to be communicated? For example: meeting times, budget information, confidential information, etc.
3. **Who?** Who are people communicating with and what are the circumstances? For example: to a supervisor, co-worker, manager, team, meetings, patient, etc.
4. **Risk of Failure:** What are the consequences of communication failure? For example: low-risk, potential money losses, or “life or death”.

Read the following scenarios on the next two pages and discuss how you should communicate the message using the above four important factors.

³ <http://www.accc.ca/ftp/es-ce/IntroductiontoESSENTIALSKILLS.pdf>

Scenario 1

Sarah needs to communicate to her co-workers about a meeting that is coming up where several MLAs and the Premier will attend. There will be a large funding announcement for the community's Friendship Centre.

Discuss:

1. **Purpose and Mode:** How should Sarah communicate this information?
2. **Information Complexity:** What information should be shared?
3. **Communication Context:** Who should she communicate this information to?
4. **Risk of Failure:** What might happen if she fails to communicate properly?

Scenario 2

Bill is an intake nurse for day surgery. His patient is coming in for knee surgery. He needs to communicate with the patient to gather information and provide information to the Anesthesiologist and Surgeon.

Discuss:

1. **Purpose and Mode:** How should Bill communicate this information?
2. **Information Complexity:** What information should be shared?
3. **Communication Context:** Who should he communicate this information to?
4. **Risk of Failure:** What might happen if he fails to communicate properly?

Scenario 3

Leo is a truck driver. He drives a truck to the diamond mines. As he is driving across the ice, he notices some open water on the lake.

Discuss

1. **Purpose and Mode:** How should Leo communicate this information?
2. **Information Complexity:** What information should be shared?
3. **Communication Context:** Who should he communicate this information to?
4. **Risk of Failure:** What might happen if he fails to communicate properly?

Scenario 4

Discuss:

Laura works in a local convenience store. She works from 8 am to 4 pm each day and has the weekends off. She has a doctor's appointment on Wednesday at 8:30 am.

1. **Purpose and Mode:** How should Laura communicate this information?
2. **Information Complexity:** What information should be shared?
3. **Communication Context:** Who should she communicate this information to?
4. **Risk of Failure:** What might happen if she fails to communicate properly?



Communicating with Others Learning Activity 1.8

Communication at Work⁴

Read each scenario and each statement. Decide if each statement shows good or poor communication skills. If you identify that the statement uses poor communication skills, write a statement that would improve it.

1. Your co-worker politely asks you to help clean up a mess that another co-worker made. You return to your own tasks, making the following statement:

"It's not my fault the mess was made and I can't help clean up right now anyway because I don't have time."

Good communication skills _____ Poor communication skills _____

2. You are trying to explain where the supply room is located to a newly hired employee who does not understand English well. You show him by pointing with your right hand as you say very loudly:

"You have to turn right at the end of the hall."

Good communication skills _____ Poor communication skills _____

⁴ Ready to Work North Workbook (p.135)

3. A customer is checking in at the hotel where you work. You pass her a form to fill out and say:

"Please fill in the top part of the form, dear."

Good communication skills _____ Poor communication skills _____

4. As a customer is leaving, you say the following with a smile and a wave:

"Thank you for coming in and I hope to see you again."

Good communication skills _____ Poor communication skills _____

5. You need to talk to the hotel manager about booking several rooms for a conference. You ask to speak to the manager, but you are told that she is away on vacation for two weeks. You sigh and say:

"Well I really need to talk to someone in charge about booking some rooms. Who should I speak to?"

Good communication skills _____ Poor communication skills _____



Communicating with Others

Learning Activity 1.9

Assertiveness Quiz⁵

Answer the questions on the next page to help you gain insights about your current level of assertiveness. Assign a number to each item using the scale.

Words to know before you begin:

Abrasive: Showing little concern for the feelings of others; harsh
She didn't have many friends because of her abrasive behavior.

Anxious: Experiencing worry or being nervous about something
She was very anxious about her exams.

Competent: Having the ability, knowledge or skill to do something successfully
He was not very competent at his job as he continually made mistakes.

Ease: Not difficult or with little effort
He gave up smoking with ease.

Entitled: Have a right to receive or do something
The landlord is entitled to ask for references.

Irrational: Not logical or reasonable
She became irrational when she found out that she didn't get the job.

Ridiculous: Extremely silly or unreasonable
That is a ridiculous price for a sweater.

⁵ <http://www.tgassociates.com/freetipsheets/HO-assertquiz.asp>

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Always 5 4 3 2 1 Never

_____	I ask others to do things without feeling guilty or anxious.
_____	When someone asks me to do something I don't want to do, I say "no" without feeling guilty or anxious.
_____	I am comfortable when speaking to a large group of people.
_____	I express my honest opinion to my friends, teacher or boss.
_____	When I experience strong feelings (anger, frustration, disappointment, etc.), I can talk about them easily.
_____	When I express anger, I don't blame others for "making me mad."
_____	I am comfortable speaking up in a meeting or class.
_____	If I disagree with the majority opinion in a meeting, I can "stick to my guns" without feeling uncomfortable or being abrasive.
_____	When I make a mistake, I acknowledge it.
_____	I can tell others when their behaviour affects me.
_____	Meeting new people in social situations is something I do with ease and comfort.
_____	When discussing my beliefs, I do so without labelling the opinions of others as "crazy," "stupid," "ridiculous," or irrational."

_____	I assume that most people are competent and trustworthy and do not have a problem asking them to do something.
_____	I feel confident that I can learn new things.
_____	I believe my needs are as important as those of others and I am entitled to have my needs satisfied.
_____	Total Score

How assertive are you?

60 or higher

You have good assertive behaviours and probably handle most situations well.

45-60

You have a fairly assertive outlook. There are some situations in which you may be naturally assertive, but you should be able to increase your assertiveness through practice.

30-45

You seem to be assertive in some situations but your natural response is either to be non-assertive or aggressive. You may want to practice new behaviours in order to handle things much more assertively in the future.

15-30

You have difficulty being assertive. You need to practice and allow yourself time to grow and change. You can become much more comfortable in situations where asserting yourself is important.



Communicating with Others

Learning Activity 1.10

Assertive, Passive, or Aggressive?

What Does Assertiveness Look Like?

Here are some common scenarios, with examples of each style of behavior.

Scenario A: Someone cuts in front of you at the supermarket.

Aggressive response: You assume they did it on purpose and you angrily say, “Hey, buddy, no cuts!”

Passive response: You let the person stay in front of you.

Assertive response: You assume that they may not have seen you in line, and politely say, “Excuse me, but I was in line.”

Scenario B: Your friend, who talks a lot, calls to vent about her bad day. Unfortunately, you have a lot of work to do and don’t have time to talk.

Aggressive response: You become angry that she obviously doesn’t respect your time, cut her off, and sarcastically say, “Oh, get over it! I have my own problems!”

Passive response: You let her talk for as long as she needs, and figure that your deadline can suffer; she needs your help.

Assertive response: You listen for a minute or two, then compassionately say, “Wow, it sounds like you’re having a tough day! I’d love to talk to you about it, but I don’t have the time right now. Can we talk later tonight?”

Get the idea? Now it is your turn. Read the scenarios below and write what an aggressive, passive and assertive response would be.

Scenario One: Your boss has asked you to mop the floors. You start mopping them. Ten minutes later he comes and says rather meanly that he would like you to shovel the front walkway.

Aggressive response:

Passive response:

Assertive response:

Scenario Two: You bring your car to a garage for service. You ask the mechanic to call and let you know how much it will cost before doing the work. He doesn't call and when you call him he tells you he has already done the work and your bill is \$450.

Aggressive response:

Passive response:

Assertive response:

Scenario Three: You go to a party with some people but the person who is driving has too much to drink and refuses to let anyone else drive.

Aggressive response:

Passive response:

Assertive response:

Scenario Four: Your co-worker always asks to borrow a few dollars at lunch each week, but he rarely pays you back. You are beginning to resent him.

Aggressive response:

Passive response:

Assertive response:



Active Listening **Learning Activity 2**

3 Handouts

2.1: The Bug Activity (handout)

This is a good activity to start this section with. Ask learners to take out a blank piece of paper. Give the following instructions. Learners are not allowed to ask questions. Compare bugs when everyone finishes. The handout shows what the bug is supposed to look like. Ask learners why they think all their bugs are different.

- The bug is round.
- The bug has eight legs, grouped in pairs, with four legs on the left and four legs on the right. In the pairs, one leg is longer than the other.
- The bug has two eyes on top of the body.
- The bug has two squiggly antennae.
- The bug has two pea-pod shaped wings.
- The bug has a spot next to each wing.
- The bug has a triangular stinger on the bottom of its body.
- The bug has two feelers on each foot – one longer than the other, both coming from the same side of the leg.
- The bug has a round mouth, placed between the two eyes.
- The bug laid five square eggs to the left of the stinger.

2.2: Discussion (handout)

Discuss this statement: “Very few people listen. Most people are waiting to be heard.” Ask learners to come up with a definition of “active listening”.

Often when people talk to each other, we don't listen attentively. We are often distracted, half listening, half thinking about something else. When we are engaged in a conflict, we often are busy formulating a response to what is being said. Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding.

Ask learners what the difference between "hearing" and "listening" is. Go over the handout together and discuss active listening.

2.3: Listen to What I Hear ⁶

Ask two volunteers to give you directions to their homes. Practice good listening techniques (ask questions, repeat what they said, make eye contact, look interested) with the first person and poor listening techniques (look up at the ceiling, don't ask questions, look bored) with the second. Ask students what you did that showed you were a good listener in the first example and what you did that showed you were a poor listener in the second.

2.4: Selective Listening

Divide your group into two different groups and then ask some people from group A to pay close attention to the story you tell and ask them to calculate the number of times you say the word 'then' and some others to count the number of times you say the word 'so'. Do not give any such instructions to group B. Then relate a short story to them. At the end of the story, ask them questions relating to the story. You'll find that the people from group A who were asked to calculate the words 'then' and 'so' will be unable to answer the questions related to the story, while those from group B will have no such problem. This game shows you the different types of listening and how it works.

2.5: To be Continued...⁷

⁶ http://www.essortment.com/all/communicationte_rqmd.htm

This is an easy activity to improve active listening and requires a common topic to be given to the group on which one of the learners begins to speak. The instructor suddenly stops the person in mid-sentence and asks the person next to the speaker to continue along the lines of the previous speaker's last few sentences. This continues for some time and once everyone gets a hang of how it works, the instructor can then pick anyone at random to continue speaking. This greatly improves listening and helps everyone to learn to listen carefully to the speaker.

Some topics to consider are: hunting, going out on the land, going on vacation, Christmas, If I won a million dollars, etc.

2.6: The "Were You Listening?" Quiz⁸

For this activity, each learner goes to the front of the room and is asked three questions about themselves. Some possible questions are:

- What is your favourite food?
- What is your favourite subject?
- What was your first job?
- What career would you like to pursue?
- What is your favourite movie?

The instructor makes a note of the answers given by each learner. Then the group is told that they have a quiz, to see if they really listened to each other. Learners have to then recall and identify which person had answered what. So the instructor will say "Whose first job was working at a hotel?"

2.7: Seven Simple Steps to Active Listening (handout)

⁷ <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/active-listening-activities.html>

⁸ <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/active-listening-activities.html>

Ask learners what they think is important for active listening. They can work in small groups to come up with a list for active listening. Compare their list to the handout.

2.8: Practice Your Listening Skills

Learners pair up. Each person takes a turn talking for seven minutes about a subject. They can talk about anything they want – such as their day, or their children, or what they did last night, or even a problem they are having. While they are talking, the other person practices their skills in just listening. They can use their body language to let the talker know that they are listening, but no words.

Debrief afterwards by asking these questions:

- What role was easier?
- Which role did you enjoy the most?
- Could you stay focused on the speaker for a full seven minutes?
- Did you have the urge to interrupt the speaker?
- What types of things were you tempted to say?
- Was it difficult to speak for seven minutes?
- What did you learn from this activity?

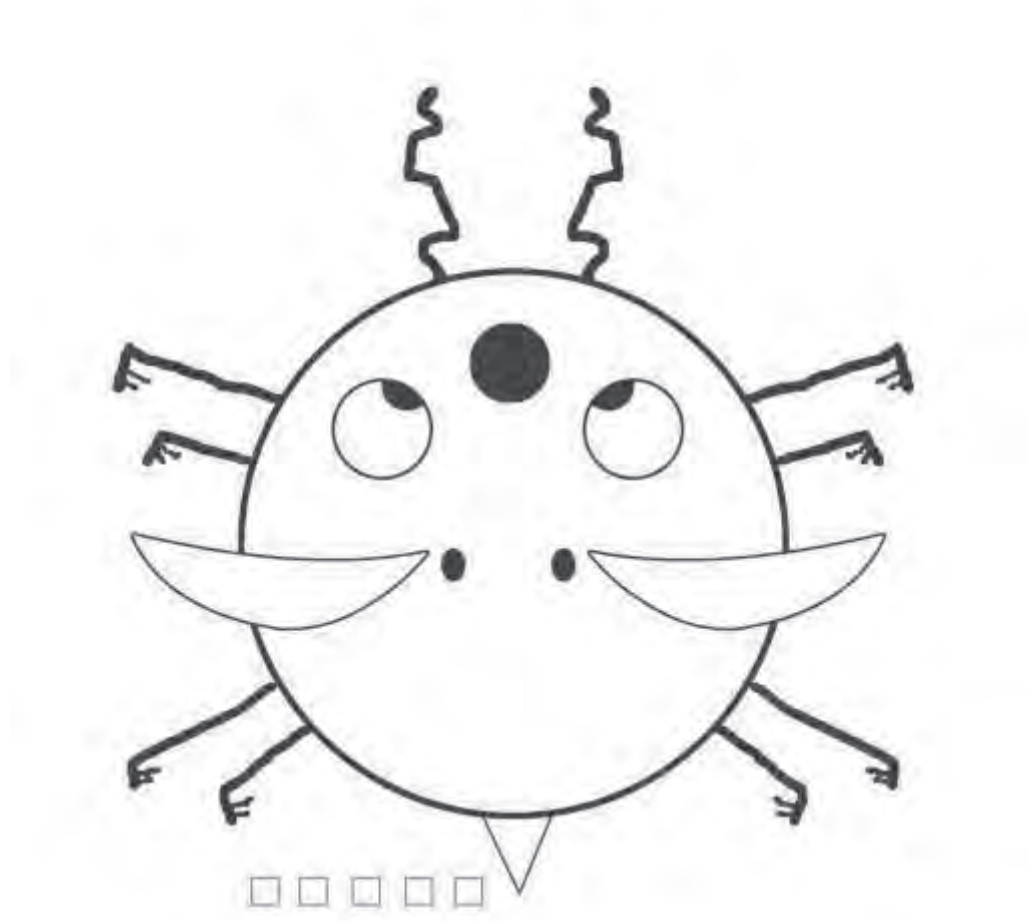
2.9: Active Listening

Ask learners to get into groups of three. One person is to talk about something very important to them for three to four minutes. Another person is to be the listener (use eye contact, body language, silences, and verbal minimal encouragers – like questions). The listeners are to concentrate on what they are hearing. The third person is to be the observer. The task is to observe the listeners' verbal and non-verbal skills. Do this three times and change roles each time. Then as a large group discuss how it went for everyone.



Active Listening
Learning Activity 2.1

The Bug



BUG



Active Listening Learning Activity 2.2

What is Active Listening⁹

Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that helps us understand what is being said.

Why use active listening?

- Helps us understand what is being said
- Makes us listen with a purpose
- Helps us communicate with friends, family, co-workers
- Shows mutual respect

When should you use active listening?

- When you are having problems with family members, co-workers, teens
- When you really need to concentrate on what is being said
- When you need to learn something
- When a friend needs to share their ideas and feelings with you

⁹ 120 Listening, Speaking and Viewing



Active Listening Learning Activity 2.7

Seven Simple Steps to Active Listening

1. Look at the person, and stop other things you are doing.
2. Listen not just to the words, but watch the feelings of the person.
3. Be sincerely interested in what the other person is talking about.
4. Restate what the person said.
5. Ask clarification questions once in a while.
6. Be aware of your own feelings and strong opinions.
7. If you have to state your views, say them only after you have listened.



Oral Presentations

Learning Activity 3

5 Handouts

3.1: Public Speaking

Ask learners what their number one fear is? Next tell them “According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy.” Ask learners if they are surprised by this.

Have a quick discussion on why they think people are so afraid of public speaking. Gavin de Becker, author of the book *The Gift of Fear*, wrote “What you fear is rarely what you think you fear – it is what you link to fear.” When it comes to the fear of public speaking therefore, it's not the actual speaking that most of us are truly afraid of. So why are people afraid of public speaking?

Ask learners to write down where they might now or in the future be asked to give a speech. Some examples are: presentation to the band council, thank you speech, best man speech, interview on the radio, at school, etc. Ask them to share their responses with others in the class. Discuss why it is important to learn and practice public speaking.

3.2: Three Reasons Why Public Speaking is Important

Ask learners to get into three groups. Each group brainstorms why they think public speaking is important. Make sure they have at least eight reasons written down on flipchart paper. Each group passes their flipchart paper to another group and then selects their top five choices. Again, they pass their flipchart paper to the last group and narrow the choice down to their top three reasons why public speaking is important. This is called 3-Way Rotation.

Ask groups to share their top three choices. See if those choices are similar to the ones that are listed below:

1. Almost every one of us will be involved in public speaking in some form at some point in our lives, so we need to be prepared to do a good job when that time comes.
2. Employers consistently rank public speaking and related communication skills as one of the top skills they look for in employees.
3. Being an effective public speaker gives you the tools to make a difference in your business, in your community, even in the world.

3.3: Getting Over Your Fear (handout)

Ask learners in pairs to think about the scenario below and come up with a list of helpful suggestions for their friend.

Imagine that a close friend of yours is going to have to give an important speech. Unfortunately, he or she is terrified of public speaking. What would you tell this person to make them feel better about giving the speech? What could you do to ease his or her anxiety?

Go over the handout together as a class and discuss ways to help with stage fright.

3.4: Oral Speaking Self Assessment (handout)

Ask learners to read and fill in the Oral Speaking Self-Assessment. Ask them to list their top three strengths in oral communication from the assessment and three things they would like to improve on.

3.5: One Minute Talks (handout)

One minute talks are a fun way to get learners talking in front of a group. You can use the handout for ideas for subjects or use your own ideas. Cut out the

slips on the handout and put them in a bowl or hat. Ask learners to choose a topic. If they don't like the topic they can choose another. Do one first yourself.

3.6: Oral Presentations (2 handouts)

Ask learners to prepare a five minute speech on the topic "The type of career that would interest me." The purpose of this activity is for learners to start exploring their career options by naming their values, interests and skills and to practice their oral presentation skills.

Lead learners in a brainstorm activity using the handout. In the centre of the handout is "Myself". Each quadrant has a guiding question:

1. What are my values and beliefs?
2. What are my interests?
3. What are things that I can do or want to learn how to do?
4. What kind of career would you like to do?

Using the guide, ask learners to get up and talk for five minutes about the type of career they would be interested in.

Review the handout *Tips for Oral Presentations*. Talk about what makes a good presentation. Then ask learners to present what they wrote. The purpose is for learners to gain confidence in public speaking. Some learners may prefer to sit. Try to encourage learners to get up in front of the class. Learners should also practice eye contact with the group, and learn how to glance at their notes instead of reading word for word with their head down.

3.7: Debate

1. Divide the class into two teams. The first team agrees with the statement, the second team disagrees with the statement.

2. Choose statements of relevance to your community that may have both positive and negative impacts. For example: The road should be all year round.
3. Give each team 10 minutes to discuss the topic and come up with as many reasons as they can to agree or disagree.
4. On flip chart paper, make two columns and head them “agree” and “disagree”.
5. Start the debate by allowing each team to make a general statement, such as “We agree with ___ because it is good for our community.” Then, the agree team makes their first point and the disagree team argues with their first point. Write down each new idea that each team makes in their column. Each new idea earns a point.
6. The team with the most points wins.

3.8: PowerPoint Presentations

Teach learners how to make a PowerPoint presentation. Ask them to make a PowerPoint presentation on a communication topic:

- Active listening
- Blocks to communication
- Body language
- Public speaking
- Getting over your fear of public speaking

Learners can present their presentation to the class.

You can also narrate PowerPoint presentations. Talking Books are PowerPoint presentations that use narration to tell the story. Check out the NWT Literacy Council’s website on Talking Books at http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/digital_storytelling.htm.

There are examples and instructions there on how to make a Talking Book.

3.9: Digital Storytelling

Digital Storytelling is about using computer-based tools to tell stories. As with traditional storytelling, most digital stories focus on a specific topic and contain a particular point of view. However, digital stories usually contain some mixture of computer-based images, text, recorded audio narration, video clips and/or music. Digital stories can vary in length, but most of the stories used in education typically last between two and ten minutes.

The topics can range from personal tales to the retelling of historical events, or exploring life in one's own community. A great way to begin to learn about Digital Storytelling is by viewing examples of digital stories. The NWT Literacy Council has a section on their website called Digital Literacy:

http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/digital_literacy.htm. Under this section you will find a subtitle called Digital Storytelling:

http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/digital_storytelling.htm. This section has the following:

- Examples of digital stories
- Software you will need
- Tutorials on how to make a digital story (screen casts and PDF document)
- Links to digital stories
- Links to other tutorials on Photo Story 3, iMovie and Movie Maker

You will need to have Photo Story 3 on your computers for learners to create their own digital stories. The first step in Digital Storytelling is to come up with a story and then choose photos or clipart to include in your story.



Oral Presentations Learning Activity 3.3

Tips for Getting Over Your Fear

Everyone, including accomplished professionals in music, athletics, and politics, experience fear or stage fright before their performance. Here are some tips that might help.

Prepare for your speech – If you wait until the last minute, you will be more nervous. Prepare ahead of time and practice your presentation!

Visualize your success – One of the reasons we fear speaking in public is that we've never done it. Close your eyes and think about yourself successfully delivering the speech. This will help you think positively.

Realize that no one can see your nervousness – You need to realize that most of your nervousness is invisible to the audience. To them, you just seem to be calmly presenting your speech.

Understand that mistakes are going to happen – No matter how much you prepare and practice, mistakes will happen. When you stumble or forget something, simply take a deep breath, collect your thoughts, and keep moving on as if nothing ever happened.

Try and be relaxed – Take deep breaths, calm yourself before you give your speech. Use positive self-talk like “I can do this.” Or “I am well prepared.”

Be positive – You have to realize that the audience is on your side. They want to hear what you have to say and to see you do well. Think of them as friends. The positive image should relax you and put you in a good frame of mind.



Oral Presentations Learning Activity 3.4

Oral Speaking Self-Assessment¹⁰

Complete the following chart.

I can...	Yes	Some- what	No
Ask routine questions to obtain information.			
Leave brief phone messages.			
Understand short messages and communicate the information to others.			
Give simple instructions to others on a familiar topic.			
Explain simple facts.			
Follow simple oral instructions.			
Listen to others without interrupting.			
Use appropriate body language (e.g. smiling, nodding, making eye contact) while having a conversation.			
Discuss work-related problems or issues in detail.			
Ask complex questions to get the appropriate information.			

¹⁰ http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/oral_comm_self_assessment.shtml

Career Life Work

I can...	Yes	Some- what	No
Communicate with others to resolve minor conflicts, such as customer complaints.			
Communicate with others to co-ordinate work or resolve problems.			
Express my opinions and ideas clearly and concisely.			
Restate information that is presented orally.			
Train or give clear instructions to a co-worker.			
Give a brief presentation to a small group.			
Lead routine meetings (e.g. weekly team meetings).			
Follow complex oral instructions to complete a task.			
Explain difficult subject matter using detailed examples.			
Give constructive feedback or advice.			
Speak respectfully to clients or co-workers when dealing with complex issues or resolving conflicts.			
Exchange ideas and opinions with clients, such as clarifying detailed work specifications, or negotiating contracts.			
Persuade others to consider different options.			
Give presentations to a large, unfamiliar group.			
TOTAL			

Look at the “Yes” column in **Section 1** to identify your strengths, and record them below.

Oral Communication Strengths

List your top three oral communication strengths.

Example: I am confident that I can listen to others without interrupting.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Look at the “Somewhat” and/or “No” columns in **Section 1** to identify the areas that you need to develop or strengthen, and record them below.

Areas for Improvement

List three areas for improvement.

Example: I would like to improve my ability to give presentations to a large, unfamiliar group.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Oral Presentations Learning Activity 3.5

One Minute Talks

Cut out the different topics and put them in a hat or bowl. Learners choose one topic and speak for one minute. If they don't like the topic they can exchange it for another one.

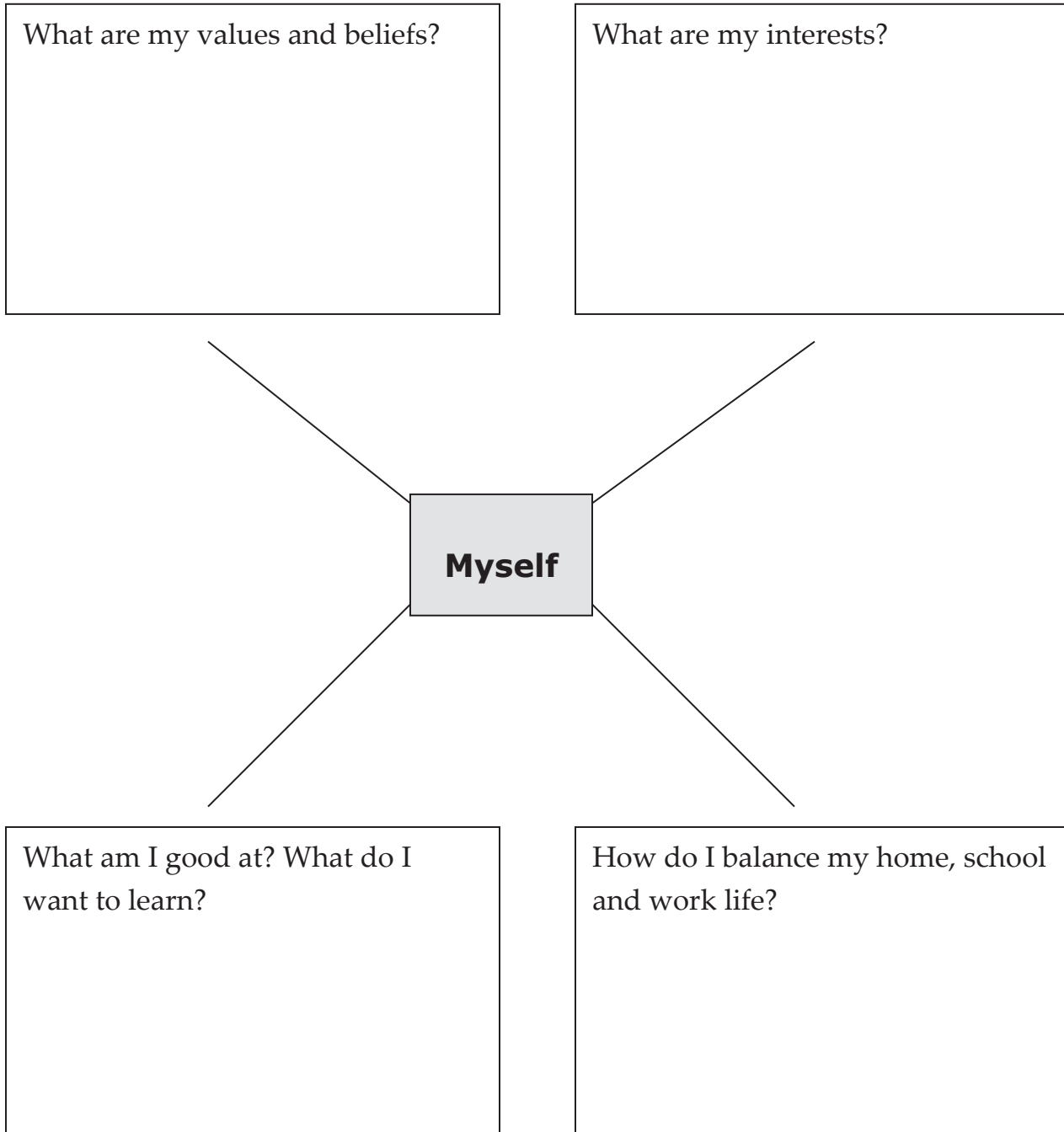
winter	summer	hunting
my child	babies	the colour red
school	TV	reading
my least favourite food	my hopes	tell us a story

communication	spring	fall
my first job	camping	my community
the colour green	Christmas	fishing
my favourite food	culture	my career goals



Oral Presentations Learning Activity 3.6a

Oral Presentations: Brainstorm





Oral Presentations Learning Activity 3.6b

Tips for Oral Presentations

1. **The topic:** Choose a topic that you would like to talk about.
2. **Practice ahead of time:** Practice your presentation at home, to your family, the bathroom mirror, or your pets.
3. **Get the audience interested:** Start your presentation with an interesting fact or question about your topic.
4. **Use cue cards:** Write the main points of your presentation on small cards. Glance at these cards to remember what comes next.
5. **Maintain eye contact:** Look at the audience as much as possible.
6. **Avoid too many hand gestures:** Try not to wave your arms around, this can distract the audience.
7. **Speak loud and clear:** Speak as if you are talking to someone across the room. Try to open your mouth wide when you speak so that words are not mumbled.
8. **Bring visual aids:** Show pictures or bring objects for the audience to look at.
9. **Encourage questions:** Invite the audience to ask questions at the end of your presentation.
10. **Give credit:** Let the audience know where and how you learned about this topic.



Working with Others (Team Building)

Learning Activity 4

7 Handouts

4.1: Work Together

Learners work in groups together to accomplish a goal. Give each group some “junk” like boxes, tape, balloons, empty Pringles cans, straws, rubber bands, magazines, etc. Each group should get the same “junk.” Tell them to build something using everything that they were given. Do not provide assistance. Give them 30 minutes to complete this task.

When the time is up, bring the group back together and share the results. Ask these questions:

1. What happened in your small group? How did your group approach the task? Did you have a goal or design in mind when you first began? What was it?
2. Were there leaders? What did they do that was helpful?
3. Were there followers? What did they do that was helpful?
4. How was the overall experience of working together?

4.2: Ways We Work with Others

As a whole group, brainstorm how we work with others in our lives. For example, at work, as a volunteer, on a board, going out on the land, in our families, etc.

Now tell learners that they are going to have to work together in this fun warm-up activity. Tell learners the scenario below:

Your plane crashed...your group needs to choose the 10 most useful items to survive.

1. Give each participant 5-10 minutes to choose and rank 10 items that they would want with them.
2. Now in small groups, learners must come to consensus on these 10 items.
3. Compare with other groups.
4. Come to consensus as a whole class.

Questions for debrief:

- a. How were decisions made?
- b. Who influenced the decisions and how?
- c. How could better decisions have been made?
- d. Did people listen to each other? If not, why not?
- e. What roles did group members adopt?
- f. How was conflict managed?
- g. What kinds of behavior helped or hindered the group?
- h. What have you learned about the functioning of this group?
- i. How would you do the activity differently if you were asked to do it again?
- j. What situations at work/home/school do you think are like this exercise?

4.3: The Ultimate Team Member?¹¹ (handout)

This activity requires large sheets of paper, writing paper, pens, and markers. Learners write their strengths and attributes they feel would help a group be successful. (For example, I have lots of ideas, I work quickly, I get along with people well.) Break learners up into groups and tell them to share with their

¹¹ <http://blog.huddle.net/building-teamwork-10-quick-and-easy-team-building-exercises-for-improving-planning-skills-and-building-trust-part-2>

group their individual strengths and the positive attributes they wrote down. After their group discussion, give each team one large sheet of paper, writing paper, markers, and a pen. Tell each group to make the “ultimate team member” by combining each team member’s strengths and positive attributes into one imaginary person. This “person” should also receive a name, have a picture drawn of them, and have their different attributes labelled. The group should also write a story about this person, highlighting all of the things their imaginary person can do with all of their amazing characteristics. At the end of the exercise, each group should show their person and read their story.

Share the handout with learners. Did they name all the attributes on the handout?

4.4: Personality Types¹² (handout)

We need all different kinds of personality types to make a team effective. Similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, this exercise uses a set of preferences which relate to group behaviors. This helps us to understand how preferences affect our group work.

This activity uses the four directions to talk about different personality types:

- **North:** Acting – “Let’s do it;” Likes to act, try things and plunge in.
- **South:** Caring – likes to know that everyone’s feelings have been taken into consideration and that their voices have been heard before acting.
- **West:** Paying attention to detail —likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting.
- **East:** Speculating – likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting.

¹² http://www.smallschoolsproject.org/PDFS/north_south.pdf

You will need four signs with the four directions on them. You will also need four sheets of flipchart paper with the four questions below on them.

- a. What are the strengths of your style?
 - b. What are the limitations of your style?
 - c. What style do find most difficult to work with and why?
 - d. Explain what the other styles need to know about you so that you can work together effectively.
1. Set up the room up with one of the four signs on each wall – North, South, East and West.
 2. Participants are invited to go to the “direction” of their choice. No one is only one “direction,” but everyone can choose one as their predominant one.
 3. Each “direction” answers the four questions on a sheet of newsprint. When complete, they report back to the whole group.
 4. Processing can include:
 - Look around the room. Is there an even distribution of people?
 - What is the best combination for a group to have? Does it matter?
 - What might happen if you only had “north” people in a group?
 - What might happen if you only had “south” people in a group?
 - What might happen if you only had “west” people in a group?
 - What might happen if you only had “east” people in a group?
 - How can you avoid being driven crazy by another “direction”?
 - How might you use this exercise with others or in other situations?

4.5: Work with Others Self-Assessment (handout)

Learners fill in the self assessment on the handout. They choose their top three strengths and three things they would like to improve on. Ask learners to share

their responses with others. Ask them how they can develop the skills they identified as needing improving.

4.6: What Makes an Effective Team? (handout)

First, in groups, ask learners to list teams or groups they have been a part of. Now ask them what team did they enjoy being part of most? What characteristics of this team made it enjoyable?

Now ask learners to brainstorm what makes an effective team. Compare their lists to the handout. Ask them if they have ever experienced any of the negative aspects to working with teams? How did they deal with the situation?

4.7: Working with Others or Working Alone?¹³ (handout)

Ask learners to think about some activities they are involved in, either at school or at home, e.g. planning schedules, working on a board, volunteering with the local hockey team, decorating, childcare, etc. On the handout, ask learners to list some of the tasks they do regularly and to say whether they do them alone or with the help of others. In the third column they say why they prefer to work this way.

On the second chart on the handout, learners read the activity and decide if they would prefer to do that activity on their own or with others. They state their reasons why.

Debrief:

- Why do you think that some activities are more suited to working alone while others are better done in a group?

¹³

http://homepages.ed.ac.uk/calarks/arks/Materials/particip/Working_with_others_or_working_alone.pdf

- Does everybody in your group agree about which tasks they prefer to do alone and which ones they prefer help with?

Ask learners to think of reasons why people want to work alone. Then ask them to think of reasons why people like to work with others.

Here are some reasons people give for **working alone**:

- Free to make all the decisions
- Can be creative
- Can work to your own time schedule
- Can take all the credit
- Can use your own methods
- No disagreements

Here are some reasons people give for **working with others**:

- Can spread the workload
- Can share ideas and talents
- Can share responsibility
- Able to do something bigger and better
- A more sociable way to work

4.8: Working with Others in Work Situations (2 handouts)

Tell learners: “The ability to work with others really helps us in the workforce. Most jobs today require that we work with others in an office setting or on projects.”

Learners choose two occupations from the Essential Skill Profiles at http://www10.hrsdc.gc.ca/es/english/ES_Profiles.aspx. They create a list of tasks that someone from this occupation might need to do in relation to working with others. And then they write why it is important that a person in that particular occupation works as a team member.

4.9: Fun Team Building Activities¹⁴

1. Line-up

Break into teams. Teams compete against each other to see who can get the challenge done faster. Some challenges are

- Line-up – Learners line up according to birthdays, alphabetically by first name or last name, age, etc. (can do this without talking)
- Alphabet Scavenger Hunt – Write down an object for each letter of the alphabet. The object must be in the room. For example: A for apple, B for binder, C for coat, D for door, E for exit.
- Scrabble – Divide the members of a group evenly if possible to have groups of 3 – 5 people. Then each member donates the first and last letters of both their first and last names: For example: MarY WhitE **MYWE** The group must create as many words as possible using the letters that they have in their pile and record them using pencil and paper. The group that creates the most words is the winner.
- Charades – Learners pick out a topic from a hat and act it out for their group. If they guess in the time allotted they get a point. If they do not guess it, the other team gets a chance. If they guess correctly, they get a point.

2. Machinery

Divide the group into teams (3 or more teams). Assign each group to build a certain machine with their own bodies such as a toaster, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, lawn mower, television, etc. Give them time to work it out. Then they build the machine and the other teams guess what it is.

¹⁴ <http://www.oakharborcheer.com/TeamBuildingGames.html>

3. All Aboard

Take a large sheet and spread it on the floor. Have all the learners stand on the sheet together. Once they have done this fold the sheet to make it smaller. Again, have all the learners get on the sheet. Continue this process. Eventually, the sheet will be so small that the learners will need to use a great deal of cooperation, teamwork, and ingenuity to get the whole class on the sheet without anyone falling out/off the sheet.

4. Toxic River

Everyone is on one side. You measure a space about 2 metres and call it a toxic river. You want the whole class to cross as fast as they can. They aren't allowed to cross the toxic river without a special pair of boots and there is only one pair of boots. Each person can use the boots only once. The boots cannot be tossed over the river. Each person has to personally give the boots to the next person and if they touch the toxic waste without the boots, the team must start over. Hint: Carrying people over is the key.



Working with Others Learning Activity 4.3

Ten Qualities of an Effective Team Player¹⁵

1. **Reliable:** Good team members are reliable and consistent.
2. **Good Communicator:** Good team members express their thoughts and ideas clearly, directly, honestly, and with respect for others and for the work of the team.
3. **Good Listener:** Good listeners are essential for teams to function effectively. Teams need team players who can absorb, understand, and consider ideas and points of view from other people without debating and arguing every point.
4. **Engaged :** Good team players are active participants. They come prepared for team meetings and listen and speak up in discussions. They're fully engaged in the work of the team and do not sit passively on the sidelines.
5. **Shares their Ideas:** Good team players share their ideas. They're willing to share information, knowledge, and experience.
6. **Cooperates:** Cooperation is the act of working with others and acting together to get the job done. Good team players figure out ways to work together to solve problems and get work done.

¹⁵ <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/ten-qualities-of-an-effective-team-player.html>

7. **Flexible:** Good team players roll with the punches; they adapt to ever-changing situations.
8. **Good Problem Solver:** Good team members can come up with solutions that will work for everyone. They're problem-solvers, not problem-dwellers, problem-blamers, or problem-avoiders.
9. **Supportive of Others:** Team players treat fellow team members with courtesy and consideration — not just some of the time but consistently.
10. **Leadership:** Every team needs someone to lead the discussion and make sure everyone is heard and everyone's opinion is considered.



Working with Others Learning Activity 4.4

Personality Type¹⁶

Look at these different directions. They each represent a different kind of personality style for working in groups. Read them over and decide which style is most like you. You might relate to several of them but decide which style is most like you. Go to that sign on the wall and discuss the questions below together.

North: Acts – “Let’s do it;” Likes to act, try things, plunge in.

West: Pays attention to detail – likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting.



East: Thinks – likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting.

South: Cares – likes to know that everyone’s feelings have been taken into consideration and that their voices have been heard before acting.

¹⁶ http://www.smallschoolsproject.org/PDFS/north_south.pdf

Questions to discuss:

1. What are the strengths of your style?
2. What are the limitations of your style?
3. What style do find most difficult to work with and why?
4. Explain what the other styles need to know about you so that you can work together effectively.



Working with Others Learning Activity 4.5

Working With Others Self-Assessment¹⁷

Fill in the chart below. Think about any paid work or volunteer work that you have done when you are filling in the chart. You can also relate these questions to working with others on school projects.

I can...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Work together with a partner or team to complete a task. (at work or at home)			
Coordinate my work with others to complete group projects. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Complete my work on time so that things are done in time. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Complete my fair share of tasks when working with a partner or team. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Follow directions from my partner or team members as required. (volunteer work or paid work)			

¹⁷ http://www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/wwo_self_assessment.shtml

Career Life Work

I can...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Give directions to my partner or team members as required. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Participate in making group decisions by contributing my ideas and suggestions. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Able to settle differences respectfully. (volunteer work or paid work)			
Improve my skills based on suggestions and advice I receive from my partner or other team members. (volunteer work or paid work or at home)			
TOTAL			

Completing this section will help you make informed training decisions.

- Look at the “Yes” columns in **Section 1** to identify your strengths, and record them below.
- Look at the “Somewhat” and/or “No” columns in **Section 1** to identify the areas that you need to develop or strengthen, and record them below.

Strengths

I am good at completing my work on time.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Areas for Improvement

I would like to get better at speaking up about my ideas.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Working with Others

Learning Activity 4.6

What Makes an Effective Team

1. Atmosphere

The atmosphere is engaged, relaxed, open, comfortable, nonthreatening.

2. Group objectives

The tasks or objectives are understood and accepted by everyone. There is free discussion leading to group commitment and no hidden agendas.

3. Communication

Everyone is open and honest, individuals build on each other's ideas, everyone feels comfortable to talk and express their ideas.

4. Handling of conflict

Conflict is seen as natural, even helpful, people work through problems together.

5. Decision-making

All opinions are voiced and listened to and then a decision is made. This decision can be made by the "boss" or through a majority vote. Or a decision can be made through consensus meaning that everyone must agree with the outcome.

6. Expressing personal feelings

People freely express their feelings and ideas.

7. Task achievement

The group comes up with clear assigned tasks for people in the group.



Working with Others Learning Activity 4.7

Working with Others or Working Alone?¹⁸

Task	By myself/with others	Why?
Re-decorating your living room	With others	Nice to have different ideas and need help moving furniture
Clean at your child's daycare	By myself	I can clean much faster with no distractions.

Look at the list of activities in the table below. Which ones would you like to do on your own and which would you rather do working alongside others? Say why you would prefer to do it this way.

¹⁸

http://homepages.ed.ac.uk/calarks/arks/Materials/particip/Working_with_others_or_working_alone.pdf

Activity	By myself/with others	Why?
Put up posters in your community.		
Clean up the kitchen area at school.		
Protest the government cut backs.		
Go to a hockey game.		
Organize a fundraising event.		
Write a report.		
Make a community garden.		
Go out on the land.		



Working with Others Learning Activity 4.9a

Working with Others in Work Situations

1. Choose two occupations from the Essential Skill Profiles.
http://www10.hrsdc.gc.ca/es/english/ES_Profiles.aspx
2. Create a list of tasks that someone from this occupation might need to do in relation to working with others.

Occupation 1: _____

Working with Others Tasks

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Why is it important that a person in this occupation work as a team member?

Occupation 2: _____

Working with Others Tasks

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Why is it important that a person in this occupation work as a team member?



Dealing with Conflict Learning Activity 5

9 Handouts

5.1: What is Conflict? (handout)

Put this statement on the board:

It is important to remember that we cannot change anyone's behaviour except our own. We cannot change our friend's behaviour, our partner's behaviour or our boss's behaviour. Sometimes, though, when we change our own behaviour, other peoples' reactions change.

Ask learners what this statement means. Is it true? Can we change people's behaviour or not? If not, what can we do to make things better in a difficult situation?

Next do a word association activity with learners around conflict. Ask learners what words come to mind when they hear the word "conflict." Ask them to write down these words on a flipchart at the front of the room. Tell them:

Conflict is an **emotional reaction** to a situation or interaction that signals **disagreement** of some kind. The emotions felt might be fear, sadness, bitterness, anger, or hopelessness.

Lastly, ask learners to review the handout on conflict quotes. Ask them to work with a partner and discuss what each quote means. Talk as a whole group about the quotes.

5.2: Looking at Conflict in a Different Way (handout)

Often when we hear the word conflict we think of negative things like fighting, arguing, or war. But conflict can also mean an opportunity for change. The Chinese symbol for conflict has two distinct symbols one represents danger and

one represents opportunity. Ask learners to look at the handout and answer the two questions: Why does one symbol represent danger and the other opportunity. How can there be opportunity in conflict?

Next read the following scenarios to learners. Ask them to find the opportunity in these situations.

- Norm doesn't want to go camping with his family. He would prefer to go to Edmonton to the mall. Sally wants to go camping out on the lake with the kids.
 - Opportunity to do both things...
- Jill likes her job, but lately her boss has asked her to do things that are not part of her job description. She really finds the work hard and is very frustrated.
 - Opportunity to learn new skills...
- You are tired of your friends coming over and making a mess, eating all your food and then leaving.
 - Opportunity to make new friends who are more respectful or to confront your friends and have a better relationship...

5.3: Why Do We Have Conflict? (handout)

Ask learners to think of a conflict that they have right now or have had in the past. Ask them to write it down on a cue card. The conflict could be with a friend, family member, school friend or someone at work. Next ask learners to think of why they had that conflict...was it because of a personality conflict, misunderstanding, lack of cooperation, etc. Write down on the board a list of why people get into conflict.

Next ask learners how they responded to that conflict. Did they avoid the issue, did they yell at the person or did they try to understand the other person's point of view?

Review the handout on causes of and reactions to conflict. See if you covered all the items on the lists.

5.4: Five Styles of Conflict Management (handout)

There are many ways to handle conflict. Here are five styles of conflict management: avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration.

Ask learners to work together to come up with definitions for these styles. Next ask them to compare their definitions to the ones on the handout and then think about the advantages and disadvantages to each style.

5.5: Using the Five Styles of Conflict Management (handout)

Learners look at each scenario and then give possible responses by using the five styles of conflict management. For each scenario there are two of the styles listed. Give this example:

- I want to save money to take a vacation; Tim wants to save money for a car.

Possible response using "competition"

- "If you don't want to go on a vacation with me, I will go on my own. You can save your money and I will save my money!"

Possible response using "accommodation"

- "Okay, if you really want to buy a car, I don't have to go on a vacation this year."

Possible response using "compromise"

- “Okay let’s figure out how we can both get something that we want. I am willing to consider going on a short holiday and then we can still save money for a car, although you might have to wait a bit longer to get it.”

A person can respond to a situation in many ways. Break learners into pairs and ask them to write down a response to each scenario using the styles of conflict management listed.

They could also act out each scenario and have people guess what style they are using.

5.6: “Pick a Style...Any Style” Conflict Game (handout)

On the handout are five cards with the five styles of conflict management written on them. If you have a large class, break the class into two groups (should be 10 or less people in each group). Each group gets the cards and the scenario page. Members of the group volunteer to act out each scenario using the style of conflict management from the card they have picked. So for example, the first scenario needs two people. Each person picks a style to act out. Groups discuss the scenario using these questions:

- What style was being used?
- What were the clues observed to distinguish the style?
- How did you feel in the role play?
- Was the style comfortable for you? Why or why not?
- What are the implications of the strategies or styles that were used?

5.7: Working through Conflict Using Collaboration (handout)

Tell this story....The Orange¹⁹

¹⁹ http://www.hrea.org/erc/Library/primary/Opening_the_Door/workshop16.html

Two little girls were arguing over an orange, "Give it to me, I want this orange, it's mine" shouted the first girl. "And I want this orange too, I need it right now," cried the other girl.

The teacher came in and saw the two girls fighting over the orange. Both seemed to want the orange. The teacher takes a knife and cuts the orange in two halves. She gives each little girl one half.

The first girl peels her half, throws away the skin, and eats the inside. The second girl also peels her half of the orange, but throws away the inside, and puts the skin aside to dry. She wanted to make some cookies out of the orange.

- What was the **requirement** of the first girl, and what was the requirement of the second girl?
- What was the **interest** of the first girl, and what was the interest of the second girl?
- If the teacher had listened to why they both needed the orange, could you imagine another resolution of this conflict?

One of the steps for working through conflict is listening! Go over the six steps on the handout for resolving conflict. Learners use some of their own experience with conflict to work through the steps.

Use these steps to solve the workplace conflicts in the next activity.

5.8: Steps to Working through Conflict (handout)

Learners use the information from the previous activity to make a flow chart of the steps for working through conflict. They can use the same steps from Activity 5.8 or they can change the steps or the wording.

5.9: Conflict at Work (handout)

All types of conflict in the workplace can be messy but it is the differences in personality that causes the most grief. Statistics show that 85% of dismissals in the workplace are due to personality conflicts.

First, ask learners to work in pairs or in a group. Ask them what kinds of conflict they have experienced at work or have witnessed in a work situation. Ask them to write down these conflicts on the handout provided or flipchart paper.

Next, cut out the scenarios on the handout. Give each pair or group one scenario and ask them to use the steps from the previous activity to solve the conflict. Ask them to write down their approach on the handout or flipchart paper and then share with the rest of the group.



Dealing with Conflict

Learning Activity 5.1

Conflict Quotes

“One of the biggest conflicts we may have in life is with ourselves if we are not living according to our values.” Unknown

“Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.” William James (American philosopher)

“The greatest conflicts are not between two people but between one person and himself.” Garth Brooks (country singer)

“Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional.” Max Lucade

“Conflict is the beginning of consciousness.” M. Ester Harding

“A good manager doesn't try to eliminate conflict; he tries to keep it from wasting the energies of his people. If you're the boss and your people fight you openly when they think that you are wrong - that's healthy.” Robert Townsend

“To observe people in conflict is a necessary part of a child's education. It helps him to understand and accept his own occasional hostilities and to realize that differing opinions need not imply an absence of love.” Milton R. Sapiristein



Dealing with Conflict

Learning Activity 5.2

Looking at Conflict in a Different Way

The Chinese symbol for conflict is two distinct symbols. One of these symbols represents danger while the other represents opportunity.



Why do you think that one symbol represents danger?

Why do you think that the other symbol represents opportunity?



Dealing with Conflict Learning Activity 5.3

Causes and Responses to Conflict

What are the causes of conflict?

- Misunderstandings
- Personality clashes
- Competition for resources
- Authority issues
- Lack of cooperation
- Differences of opinion
- Low performance
- Values or goal differences

What are some responses to conflict?

- Avoid the person
- Change the subject
- Try to understand the other person's point of view
- Find a judge/arbitrator
- Play the martyr
- Give in
- Work toward a mutually agreeable solution
- Apologize
- Whine or complain
- Fight it out
- Pretend to agree
- Try to find common ground
- Admit that you are wrong
- Turn the conflict into a joke



Dealing with Conflict Learning Activity 5.4

Five Styles of Conflict Management

Compare your definitions for the Five Styles of Conflict Management and then think of some advantages and disadvantages for each style.

1. **Avoidance** means that a person knows there is a conflict but chooses not to deal with it. An avoider walks away from the problem and may avoid the person with whom he or she is having the conflict.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

2. **Accommodation** is putting aside one's own needs and concerns in order to satisfy the needs of the other person.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

3. **Competition** is trying to win or make the other person lose by giving in. In this style, a person defends his/her position or pursues his/her own goals without regard for the needs of the other person.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

4. **Compromise** is giving up something in order to get something. It is an attempt to seek a middle ground.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

5. **Collaboration** is working together in order to satisfy the needs of both people. It involves problem solving and assumes that both people can get their needs met.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

Think about which style you use most. You might use different styles for different people. Which style do you most frequently use in a conflict with the following people?

Spouse/partner: _____

Child(ren): _____

Co-worker: _____

Boss: _____

Parent: _____

Sibling: _____

Friend: _____



Dealing with Conflict

Learning Activity 5.5

Using the Five Styles of Conflict Management

1. **Avoidance** means that a person knows there is a conflict but chooses not to deal with it.
2. **Accommodation** is putting aside one's own needs and concerns in order to satisfy the needs of the other person.
3. **Competition** is trying to win or make the other person lose by giving in.
4. **Compromise** is giving up something in order to get something. It is an attempt to seek a middle ground.
5. **Collaboration** is working together in order to satisfy both people's needs.

"I want to spend time with my friends, but he wants us to spend time only with each other."

Compromise: _____

Competition: _____

You both agree that you would like children, but you disagree about when to have them.

Collaboration: _____

Accommodation: _____

Sarah decides she doesn't want to drink anymore. Her friends are always inviting her to parties and pushing alcohol on her.

Avoidance: _____

Compromise: _____

Your son wants to borrow the car. He never puts gas in it and often is late returning it. You would like him to be more responsible and get a job to pay for gas.

Competition: _____

Collaboration: _____



Dealing with Conflict Learning Activity 5.6

“Pick a Style...Any Style” Conflict Game

Avoidance

Competition

Accommodation

Compromise

Collaboration

Scenarios

1. Two people are trying to decide who will get to ride in the front passenger seat of the car on a long trip.
2. Two couples are going on vacation together. One wants to go camping. The other wants to see the sites of the big city.
3. Two people at work need to use the photocopier to get their work completed. They both have a strict time limit.
4. Three members of the social committee at church that works by consensus are in a disagreement over whether they should have the barbeque catered or if they should have a potluck.

Questions for after role play:

1. What style was being used? (observers guess)
2. What were the clues observed to distinguish the style?
3. How did you feel in the role play?
4. Was the style comfortable for you? Why or why not?
5. What are the implications of the strategies or styles that were used?



Dealing with Conflict Learning Activity 5.7

Working through Conflict Using Collaboration

Does this sound familiar?

“You never clean the house. I’m tired of doing all the work.”

“I do too help. I just did the dishes two days ago.”

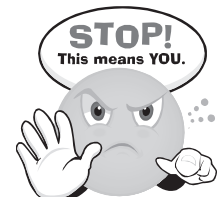
“Big deal! You did the dishes once in two weeks. What about all the clothes you leave on the floor?”

“What? Look at the mess you leave in the bathroom every night!”

Here are some steps to help you resolve conflict at home, work and in other areas of your life.

Step 1: Cool off.

Conflicts can’t be solved in the face of hot emotions. Take a step back, breathe deeply, and gain some emotional distance before trying to talk things out. Take a moment to brainstorm ten things that make you feel better when you’re hot under the collar.



- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Step 2: Use “I messages.”

“I messages” are a tool for expressing how we feel without attacking or blaming. By starting from “I” we take responsibility for the way we perceive the problem.



This is in sharp contrast to “you messages” which put others on the defensive and close doors to communication. A statement like, “You’ve left the kitchen a mess again! Can’t you ever clean up after yourself?” will escalate the conflict. Now take a look at how differently an “I message” comes across: “I’m annoyed because I thought we agreed you’d clean up the kitchen after using it. What happened?”

Let’s practice. Change the following statements to “I messages”.

1. You never clean up after yourself.

2. You always make me late for work each morning.

3. You never listen to me when I am talking.

4. You make me mad when you insist on watching what you want on T.V.

Step 3: Retell the person what you heard.

Reflective listening shows that we care enough to hear the other person out, rather than just focusing on our own point of view. It helps us with empathy.



For example:

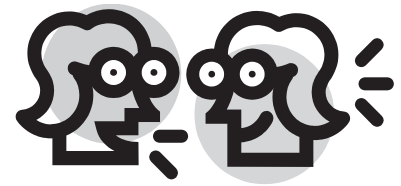
“I hear that you are frustrated that I have not cleaned up the kitchen and it shouldn’t be your responsibility to clean up my mess.”

“I hear that you wanted to go out with your friends so you didn’t clean up the kitchen. I hear that you intended to do it when you got home.”

Think about a conflict you have had recently. Could you have listened better? Write down what you heard the other person say.

Step 4: Take responsibility.

In the majority of conflicts, both parties have some degree of responsibility. However, most of us tend to blame rather than looking at our own role in the problem. When we take responsibility we shift the conflict into an entirely different gear, one where resolution is possible.



“I should have cleaned up the kitchen before I went out.”

“I should not have yelled at you about the kitchen mess.”

How could you take responsibility for a conflict that you have had recently?

Step 5: Brainstorm solutions and come up with one that satisfies both people.

Resolving conflicts is a creative act. There are many solutions to a single problem. The key is a willingness to seek compromises.



Solutions to the kitchen mess...

- Leave a note and say that I will clean up the kitchen when I get home.
- Tell my friends that they will have to wait while I clean up my mess.
- Before I yell, wait to hear what my son has to say.
- Ignore the kitchen mess.

What are some solutions to the conflict that you have been thinking about?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Step 6: Affirm, forgive, or thank.

A handshake, hug, or kind word gives closure to the resolution of conflicts. Forgiveness is the highest form of closure. Just saying thank you at the end of a conflict, or acknowledging the person for working things out sends a message of conciliation and gratitude.



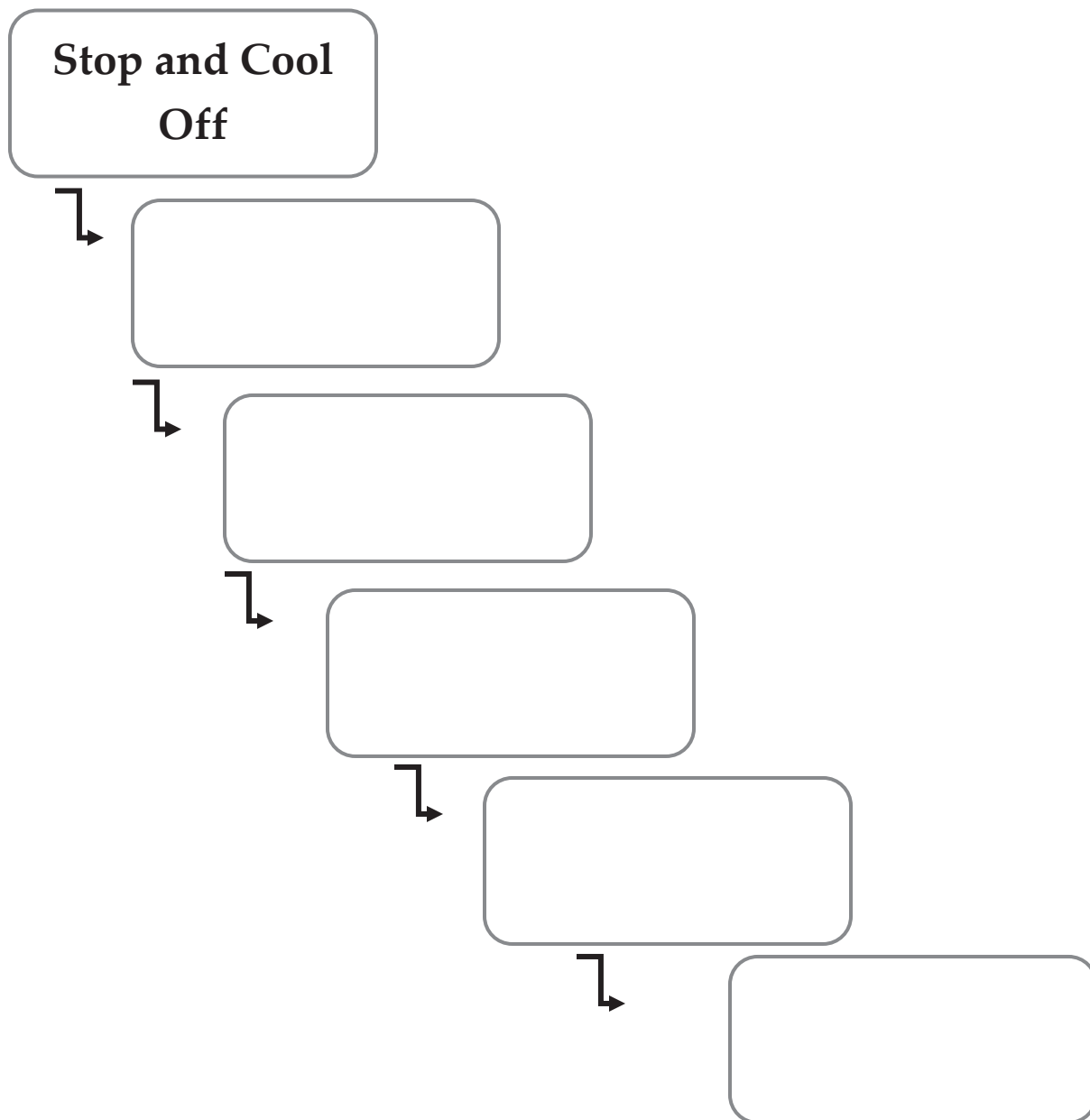


Dealing with Conflict

Learning Activity 5.8

Steps to Working through Conflict

Use the information from the previous activity to create a flow chart of working through conflict. You can change the steps and/or wording or keep them the way they are. The first step is done for you.





Dealing with Conflict

Learning Activity 5.9

Workplace Conflict

All types of conflict in the workplace can be messy but differences in personality are what cause the most grief. Statistics show that 85% of dismissals in the workplace are due to personality conflicts.

Work with a partner or group and discuss some workplace conflicts that you have experienced or that you have witnessed.

For example: two co-workers not getting along, a co-worker gossiping about another co-worker, two different opinions on how to do something, etc. Write them down below:

Scenario One

Tom works as a stocker at the local grocery. He enjoys his job at the store and everyone thinks very well of him. He does his job well and is very pleasant to other employees and customers. He often does the store manager job if the manager is on holiday or out of town for business. He is hoping to become store manager one day. Problems arise for Tom when Joe starts work at the grocery store. Joe is a very loud and personable person. He is a bit lazy and only works hard when the store manager is around. He goofs off otherwise but the store manager only sees him working hard. The store manager decides to make Joe the acting store manager when he goes away for two days. Tom gets really angry and frustrated.

Scenario Two

Your partner arrives home and tells you that he/she has been offered a promotion. It will mean moving area and house. You do not want to move as it will mean disrupting your career, leaving friends and moving your children's school. Your partner feels you should support him/her.

Scenario Three

You are a new employee at your job. One of your co-workers has been rude to you from the first day. When you asked him for help because he was the only one around, he pretended not to hear you. When you asked again, he spoke to you in another language that you didn't understand, even though you know he speaks English. You can tell that he doesn't like you, but you don't know why.

Scenario Four

You have started a new job. You are an administrative assistant for five people in an office. One person tells you to photocopy a bunch of stuff and that she would like it done by noon. Another person comes along and tells you to do something different. When you tell him that you are already busy he says that his stuff is more important and to disregard the photocopying.

Scenario Five

You have started a new job. You are assigned to work as a team with two other people that have been with the company a long time and are highly regarded. Your team is assigned to complete a task and are expected to work together until you clock out at 8 pm. There is no one at the work site other than you and your two team mates. At 6 pm your team mates approach you and inform you they are leaving early to go watch the playoffs. They tell you to stay and punch them out of the time clock at 8 pm and they will return the favour for you another time. They caution you not to tell anyone and that the task is complete so no will know they left early. They tell you to relax and hang out until 8 pm. What will you do?

Scenario Six

You are a very detailed person. You like to get things done right the first time and you take your time in doing your work. You work with someone who like to get things done fast but is sometimes sloppy. You work on many projects together and you are both very frustrated by how each other goes about getting the work done.

Your Scenario: _____

Step One: Cool down

Step Two: Use “I messages”

Step Three: Retell the person what you heard

Step Four: Take responsibility

Step Five: Brainstorm solutions

Step Six: Affirm, forgive, thank

The *Career - Life - Work* Series consists of the following:

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