

Nationally accredited training

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BSBCMM101A

Apply basic communication skills

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Learner guide

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Development

smallPRINT adopts a professional approach to ensure that its learning and assessment resources are current, accurately relate to competency standards and provide comprehensive, flexible assessment strategies.

We either employ or contract qualified workplace assessors and trainers, with industry experience, as writers to develop and upgrade our resources.

Feedback is regularly sought from our clients who are from both Registered Training Organisations and industry to validate the ongoing currency and accuracy of our resources. This feedback is acted upon to ensure that our resources meet ongoing industry and VET standards and requirements.

smallPRINT ensures that all its resources are in line with the appropriate training packages, according to information provided by the National Training and Information System.

We have procedures in place to ensure that we are aware of the ongoing review process for training packages. Our procedures ensure that we remain up to date with changes to packages/ new packages as they are approved and implemented.

Our resources are subject to regular review and continuous improvement processes. All resources are reviewed every 12 months.

Version control

Version:	VC1
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Amendment history

Date	Details
January 2009	Introduction of VC1

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Introduction

Purpose of the learning resource

This resource provides a theory and assessment framework to support the learning and assessment of competency based training within a collaborative relationship.

It supports and motivates self directed learning via a learning partnership between:

- the learner
- the trainer/ assessor
- workplace training supporters such as:
 - supervisors
 - peers
 - mentors

It can be used to support learners who are experienced workers seeking to gain formal qualifications, newly employed workers aiming to develop skills and obtain formal qualifications and those seeking training and/ or qualifications to gain employment.

The resource is designed for self-paced learning and is also suitable for delivery in a workshop or classroom. Depending on the category of learner and the delivery method these materials should be used differently.

For example:

- an experienced worker might use this resource to refresh their skills and knowledge and as a tool for preparing to have their competency assessed
- a learner currently employed should be able to practise the skills in their workplace; this resource provides background information and a framework for assessment of competence
- for learners who are not currently in employment, where this resource is used in face-to-face delivery or in a distance mode, trainers should provide opportunities for learners to develop and practise their skills in a simulated workplace

Learners should be encouraged by their trainer/ assessors to undertake additional learning tasks.

This might include:

- drawing upon their knowledge in practice situations beyond what has been facilitated by the trainer
- research
- reading
- reflection

Trainer/ assessors should also provide supplementary information including interpretation of the contents of this resource. They should initiate, with the learners discussion about the subject matter and should encourage learners to contribute their own experiences and interpretations of the material. It is not necessary to work through the guides in the order in which they are written. However this is at the discretion of the trainer/ assessor.

Structure of the learning resource

This resource consists of 4 parts:

1. Part 1 - Learning support materials
2. Part 2 - Assessment information
3. Part 3 - Assessment tools
4. Appendix- Competency review tool

Part 1 – Learning support materials

This part is organised so learners can, with the support of their trainer/ assessor, plan their learning and engage in activities. It is divided into sections which relate directly to the learning elements for each unit.

Part 1 contains:

- theory (information)
- learning prompts
- assessment activities
- resources and references



Theory is identified by this icon.

Theory provides information about the elements, performance criteria and essential knowledge that apply to this unit. This information will assist the learner to complete the assessment tasks required to achieve competency in this unit.



Learning prompts are identified by this icon.

Learning prompts are designed to encourage the learner to build upon the underpinning knowledge which they have acquired by reading and reflecting upon the theory provided. They may also encourage the learner to research additional information and to expand their practicing of skills.



Assessment activities are identified by this icon.

The activities should become part of a formative assessment. Trainer/ assessors should have processes in place to provide feedback and reinforcement to learners as they progress through the activities and the assessment processes. This is pivotal to the learning experience. Assessment activities are also part of the learning process, particularly interactive activities such as demonstrations, group work or case studies.



Resources and references are identified by this icon.

Provides a list of resources from which this learner guide was developed. This list can also be used as additional reading material that can be accessed for further information.

Part 2 – Assessment information

This part provides the following:

- introduction to competency assessment
- unit information

Part 3 – Assessment tools

The assessment tools provided in this resource are

- the assessment activities in the workbook
- the written/oral questions in the final assessment section of the workbook
- the project(s) in the final assessment section of the workbook
- supervisor/ third party or assessor demonstration report

Please refer to the introduction to Part 2- Assessment tools for more detailed information on competency assessment and the assessment tools included in this resource.

Appendix – Competency review tool

This appendix consists of review tools for:

- range statement
- elements and performance criteria
- critical aspects for assessments
- required skills
- required knowledge
- employability skills

These tools can be used for:

1. Assessment mapping and validation
2. Assisting the trainer to devise and facilitate learning activities and/ or assessment activities which build upon the underpinning knowledge acquired by reading through, and reflecting upon, the text.
3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
4. Evidence gathering and recording at any stage of the training
5. The **Appendix - Competency review tool** can be used for collecting, recording and submitting a **portfolio of evidence** for RPL.

Please refer to the introduction to Appendix- Competency review tool for more detailed information.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The tools in this resource can be used by learners to identify their current competence and the evidence they have to support formal Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Learners might already have some or all of the skills required for this unit. If they believe they can demonstrate these skills, they should speak with the trainer/ assessor about applying for skills recognition.

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Part 1: Learning support material

Section 1: Identify workplace communication procedures

This section addresses the following performance criteria:

- Identify organisational communication requirements and workplace procedures with assistance from appropriate people
- Identify appropriate lines of communication with supervisors and colleagues
- Seek advice on the communication method/equipment most appropriate for the task



Learning prompt

Read through the material, look at the assessment activities.

After learners have read and understood the information provided they should take the opportunity to practise the skills referred to within this section prior to undertaking the assessment activities. Trainer/ assessors should give guidance in this regard.

This will enable learners to build and improve their skills.



Identify organisational communication requirements and workplace procedures with assistance from appropriate people

Good communication establishes a connection and understanding between two or more people. It enhances individuals, work performance and relationships with others. It allows individuals to interact to satisfy their own needs and to develop their personal, social and work relationships. It also enables leaders and managers to control work procedures, motivate others and balance the needs and goals of individuals with those of the organisation.

Successful people and organisations are usually those who communicate well, because they convey clearly to other people what they are doing and what they require. Successful communicators apply their interpersonal skills to listening, speaking, questioning, assertiveness, verbal and nonverbal communication.

In order to perform competently in the workplace you rely heavily on information and communication. The information you need will be either specific - applicable to task and roles – or general – related to organisational and system functions.

Information comes from both internal and external sources.

Ongoing information required from both internal and external sources could include:

Internal information	External information
Organisational vision and mission Role and task instructions Organisational policies and procedures Code of Ethics Code of Practice Standard Operating Procedures OHS practices and safety procedures Technical instructions Resource information Workmates and team mates	Environmental information Political and social trends Benchmarking and best practice Legislation Community needs and issues OHS requirements Resource information Supplier/ product information – machinery, equipment etc Networks Social contacts

Information helps:

- senior managers make long range big picture decisions
- middle level managers make tactical decisions
- supervisors make operational decisions
- all personnel to do their jobs to the required standards

How and where can you access this information?

Some of the sources of workplace information will be:

- managers and leaders
- co-workers
- human resource documents
- government documentation
- instruction manuals
- survey results and reports
- statistical and graphical analyses
- meetings and consultations
- memos/ faxes/ email
- telephone conversations
- journals, magazines and newspapers
- counselling or performance management meetings
- face-to-face consultations/ interviews
- reports – monthly, annual etc
- external consultants/ researchers/ contractors
- internal and external networks
- social contacts both at work and out of work hours

What do you use this information for?

- competently and efficiently doing your job
- efficiently and effectively meeting customer needs and expectations
- instructing and consulting with other workers
- inducting, coaching, mentoring and training other personnel
- informing senior management of process measurements, needs for improvement, progress toward targets, problems in need of resolution
- performance evaluations
- building relationships with suppliers and customers who are both internal and external to the organisation
- promoting your organisation's image externally
- promoting a healthy workplace culture (internally) which complies with the ethics, values and standards required by your organisation

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Assessment activity 1

1. From what sources would you get the information you need to do your job effectively?

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2. Why is it important to develop communication skills and what problems are likely to result from poor communication systems at work?

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Identify appropriate lines of communication with supervisors and colleagues

The ability to communicate effectively and assertively impacts on the efficacy with which we are able to build relationships in the workplace (with both internal and external customers), share information, delegate, coach/ instruct others, respond to other people, and manage our own performance. In other words, it impacts on every aspect of our work.

Effective communication involves understanding and being skilled in:

- verbal and non-verbal communication
- active listening techniques
- vocal techniques
- written communication
- electronic communication

Good communication is a highly prized ability; which contributes to your value in the workplace.

Communication is about messages. A message is sent and received. However, the message must be understood as it was intended. If this does not occur then there has been no effective communication.

Why do people communicate with each other?

To persuade, inform or entertain.

We communicate in order to:

- meet our own needs
- to understand others and to make ourselves understood
- meet the needs of other people
- convey or share information, ideas, concepts, opinions
- create situations (to inspire or influence others) which result in action being taken

The information you require to do your job will come from the various sources. Your job specification will provide basic information about your role and the lines of communication in your organisation. Further information about communication lines should be conveyed during induction and your initial job training. You will then need to consult with your supervisor to clarify any of your communication needs – that is, to determine the reliable sources of information in your organisation to find out who you need to provide information to. You will also need to clarify the form in which that information should be conveyed – written, report form, verbal, electronic etc.

Information is required by all organisations, in order to:

- set directions, goals, strategies and policies
- obtain and analyse data and information about customers, competitors and the external environment
- make resource (human and material) distribution decisions at the organisational level

Information which is verified and used becomes knowledge. Knowledge is the intangible asset that gives an organisation its function and value. Shared knowledge contributes to continuous improvement and is the key to organisational success.

Not all knowledge or information is written. A great deal of the information you communicate to colleagues is verbal. However, the formal and written information in an organisation must be managed in ways that make it useable and accessible.

In order to use information effectively organisations have efficient, effective and well managed information systems.

Organisations with flat management structures have, by reason of their structure, more proficient communication systems. Hierarchical structures inhibit communication and can be responsible for setting up obstructions to the free two-way flow of information. Within the organisational context, information may be seen by managers as a key to power. They might, therefore, restrict information flow. This can lead to confusion, mistakes, resentment and situations where employees work against management.

Poor systems and system management can also lead to information being lost, improperly stored or the integrity of the system being mismanaged.

Efficient systems act to disseminate information rapidly and accurately. Where management structures and systems enable free access to information, and the ability to quickly and efficiently input data, employee performance levels will increase. Information is a resource. The more information employees have, the more likely it is that they will support change, improvement and organisational goals.

Better quality information
+ honest, open communication
= higher productivity.



Assessment activity 2

1. Conduct some research on an organisation of your choice. Who do you think the employees would be and with whom would they need to communicate with?

For each of the people or departments listed, explain what type of communication processes are used and the procedures for communicating information. For example a manager would communicate with all departments and convey information using email or internal memos.

Person with whom or department with which you need to communicate	Information required or communicated.	Procedures used to convey the information
Manager	all departments	email, memos, meetings

2. Why do you think it is necessary to be aware of culturally appropriate techniques when communicating with people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities?

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Seek advice on the communication method/equipment most appropriate for the task

Communication methods used at work are primarily written and verbal (oral). Your organisation will, for instance, have written policies, procedures and standard operating procedures. You will need to make written reports to supervisors or managers. Often specific task instructions will be written or will take the form of standard operating procedures. Verbal instructions might be given by your supervisor or manager. You will probably use verbal communications with your work or team mates.

However, in some instances electronic communication forms will be used – email, intranet. Sometimes management might send out memos to staff, to notify them of a problem, a change in organisational practice, or to advise staff of meeting times etc. Faxes can also be used for similar purposes.

When dealing with customers you might use the telephone, send and receive electronic communication, use faxes and/or written communication in the form of letters, invoices etc.

For each person or group and for each communication instance you will have to determine what the most suitable medium is.

Apart from actual written words, pictures, charts and graphs often provide a very effective communication tool. They provide an instant visual image that most people understand more quickly and better than a block of text.

Symbols are a visual language. They are effective in that they are universally recognised, thus overcome many language barriers. The smoking symbol, for instance, illustrated on the right, is a universally recognised symbol.

Male and female toilets in public places are often distinguished by symbols or pictures that can be easily understood.

Safety Houses can be distinguished by specific signage.

Signs indicate where and what type of fire extinguisher is available in an office or factory.

Colour is also important to signs. Green EXIT signs and red ENTRANCE signs are recognisable regardless of the language used.





Assessment activity 3

1. Under what circumstance might it be necessary to send a fax or a memo to other staff members?

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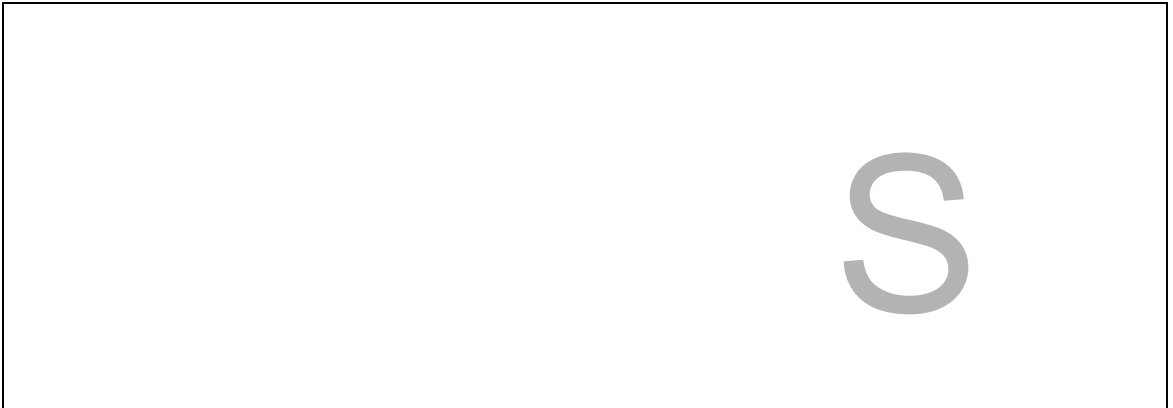
2. In the case where you have identified a fairly major problem at work, what communication methods would you use to inform a manager or supervisor?

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3. In the space provided, draw 2 symbols and/or logos that you are familiar with in a workplace. What do they signify and why are they used?



a. This symbol communicates:

b. It is important because:



a. This symbol communicates:

b. It is important because:

Section 2: Communicate in the workplace

This section addresses the following performance criteria:

- Use effective questioning, and active listening and speaking skills to gather and convey information
- Use appropriate non-verbal behaviour at all times
- Encourage, acknowledge and act upon constructive feedback



Learning prompt

Read through the material, look at the assessment activities.

After learners have read and understood the information provided they should take the opportunity to practise the skills referred to within this section prior to undertaking the assessment activities. Trainer/ assessors should give guidance in this regard.

This will enable learners to build and improve their skills.



Use effective questioning, and active listening and speaking skills to gather and convey information

Communication act as a bridge between people.

Verbal communication requires active listening, effective questioning and the ability to speak correctly and clearly.

Listening skills

Contrary to popular belief, listening is an active rather than a passive process. Listening requires commitment; it is a cognitive process that involves receiving and processing stimuli. Hearing is a simple physical process and does not necessarily mean you are listening. Obviously we must be able to hear the communication, but we must also listen actively in order to decode and understand it. If we neither hear nor listen to the communication we cannot respond to it or act upon it.

Good listening is as important as good speaking.

There are 3 levels of listening:

1. The non-hearing level - when we do not listen at all.
2. The hearing level – when we hear what is being said, but do not allow it to penetrate.
3. The thinking level – when we hear and also think about what is being said.

Active and passive listening

Active listening or reflective listening is where the receiver is purposefully and intently concentrating on what is being said.

Passive listening differs in that it can simply provide a supporting and receptive environment. Music is often listened to passively.

Success or failure throughout life is often dependent on how well or poorly we listen. Almost any job involves a certain amount of listening, for example listening to instructions. Poor listening skills are a major cause of communication breakdown. One of the reasons for this is because we talk at about 100-120 words a minute, but we think at about 400-500. Tests of listening comprehension show that, without training, the average person listens at about 25% efficiency.

Active listening is important because:

1. It demonstrates courtesy and respect for the sender.
2. We might learn something new.
3. If we listen, the sender is more likely to listen to us.
4. Listening encourages further communication.
5. Listening enables us to determine the right response to make to the sender.

Active listening is supported by effective questioning

What sort of questions should you ask?

1. Open questions elicit detailed responses; eg 'How do you think we could improve these results?'
2. Closed questions elicit one word (such as yes/no) answers; eg 'Is this correct?'
3. Probing questions can be used to follow up (ask for more information) either open or closed questions; eg 'What else could we do? Why do you believe this is correct?'
4. Hypothetical and reflective questions ask people to consider scenarios or contingencies; eg 'What would happen if...?'

When communicating with others you will use a range of questioning techniques, to elicit the full range of information you require. For instance, when you are attending to customers you will need to ask specific questions that will let you know what the customer actually requires.

Do not use:

- leading questions which include the answer in the question, or can be coercive; eg 'You wouldn't use a hammer for this task would you?' or 'We're all happy about working over the weekend aren't we?'
- loaded questions which are no win questions implying judgment regardless of the answer; eg 'Have you stopped smoking marijuana yet?'

Good communication - a checklist:

- speak clearly at the right pace, not too fast or slow
- check that the person has understood you and that you have understood them
- do not blame others for not understanding you
- be an active listener
- be patient, sincere
- smile and use other positive, friendly expressions appropriately
- be aware of personal presentation and body language
- use the appropriate level of language for the listener
- be open and straightforward
- accept others as they are, without judgment
- use humour appropriately
- admit mistakes
- state clearly what you want without being complicated
- do not confuse people by giving too much information at once
- write/ speak clearly, for a clear purpose
- choose the right medium for the purpose (eg do not use the phone if a letter or fax would be better)
- be conscious of your voice and para-language
- have something worthwhile to communicate
- know when to be quiet

Tips for better speaking:

- think and plan before you speak if possible
- stick to the point, do not waffle or wander off into unrelated subject areas
- do not communicate your assumptions and prejudices, for example, not all elderly people are deaf, nor all Indian migrants have poor English speaking skills etc
- give and get feedback, you could say things like, 'Does that seem to make sense?' or 'Have I got that right?'
- avoid double meanings or unclear messages
- allow the listener to speak too
- use words and concepts the listener will understand, do not use complicated language or vocabulary to impress
- watch for the listener's body language, does the listener seem to be bored, confused, trying to get a word in too

Successful communication

How do you know when your audience is responding correctly and understanding the information you are communicating? **Ask them.** Use appropriate questioning. Actively listen to their responses; observe the body language and the para-language they use in responding to questions.

Feedback and reinforcement increase understanding.



Assessment activity 4

1. Explain, in your own words, what active listening means.

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2. Give 6 examples of open questions that you might use when communicating with workmates or supervisors.

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3. If you received an instruction while at work but do not feel that you really understood it, what action would you take? What will happen if you did not take this action?

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Use appropriate non-verbal behaviour at all times

Whilst language provides the basis for much communication, and much of our communication is verbal, non-verbal communication is also important. Body language and para-language contribute greatly to the effectiveness of communication. The way we feel about ourselves - levels of confidence, self-esteem and belief in our abilities - and situational circumstance will have a great impact on our communication skills.

When sharing information with a group of people, remember that the average person's attention span is limited, in that they will stop listening to information that is irrelevant, unclear, too wordy, or not of interest. Present information in as precise and clear a manner as possible.

We communicate via 3 channels:

1. Verbal – oral language - spoken or written.
2. Non-verbal - body language - visual signs.
3. Para-language – vocal tone and style.

Although we all use language in order to communicate, and language in this instance includes numbers, the majority of our communication is, in fact, not verbal. It stems from body language and para-language. The spoken language is actually a rather poor medium for communication, thus the greater part of our communication is non-verbal.

Non-verbal communication

Body language refers to facial expressions, gestures and the ways in which we hold our bodies whilst communicating. In very general terms, eye contact indicates interest and listening; leaning forward indicates involvement or enthusiasm; smiling indicates warmth and welcome; nodding your head demonstrates understanding or agreement, shaking your head signals poor understanding or disagreement etc.

Para-language refers to the tone of voice used when communicating. Enthusiasm can be conveyed by speaking rapidly and emphatically; monotonal speech may signal boredom or depression, terse, loud tones may indicate fear or anger etc. Consider also the way that para-language can change the meaning of a sentence or of a concept. Try saying the following sentence in various ways. Place the emphasis on the different words in the sentence.

- I did not say I saw John cheating at cards last night.
- I did not say I saw John cheating at cards last night.
- I did not say I saw John cheating at cards last night.
- I did not say I saw John cheating at cards last night.
- I did not say I saw John cheating at cards last night.

Each time you emphasise a different word it changes the meaning of the sentence. This is how para-language works. In any face-to-face interaction, one speaker will generally control and manage the response of the other person through the use of verbal and non-verbal communication. Understanding how effective our own communication skills are, and how we can influence the behaviour of others through communication, is critical to workplace success.

When communicating at work:

- model confidence and enthusiasm
- use your tone of voice to emphasise key points
- vary your voice volume
- stand up straight and square on to your audience
- speak clearly and not too quickly
- smile when appropriate
- speak to each person individually, making eye contact
- ensure your gestures are relaxed and not forced or theatrical
- use appropriate facial expressions
- ensure your personal appearance and grooming are appropriate to the occasion
- do not forget the messages you communicate non-verbally



Assessment activity 5

1. If you speak very rapidly, how can this make communication ineffective?

2. You can learn a lot about people by observing their body language. What sorts of things can body language tell you about people's attitudes with regard to the following? How do people convey this information? Describe the body or para-language cues.

Attitude toward:

- their job
- honesty and openness
- willingness to cooperate or provide assistance

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Encourage, acknowledge and act upon constructive feedback

How do you know when your communication is effective – achieving its intention?

By giving and receiving feedback. Feedback can, of course, be both verbal and non-verbal. Feedback is the response you give or receive as a result of communication.

When you ask a question you expect to receive an answer. This is feedback. If the response actually provides an answer to your question, then it is clear that the message was understood as it was sent.

If the response does not actually answer the question you need to consider:

- whether the language you used was clear
- whether you phrased (or formatted) the question correctly
- what other barriers you might need to overcome to clarify the questions

You might also have to ask if the other person involved in the communication has a reason for not answering the question, for example, are they a politician whose intent is to evade a direct answer?

Understanding and response

In other circumstances, responses from a listener will include nodding and shaking of the head, saying 'yes' or 'I understand' at appropriate times or, in the case where you give a specific instruction, the fact that the receiver carries out your instruction correctly provides feedback.

However, is the fact that the listener says 'yes' or claims to understand, a true reflection of their understanding? Even if you say to someone 'Do you understand?' and they reply 'Yes'; can you be sure that they have understood?

How many times have you thought you communicated effectively with someone, by telling them something or giving an instruction, only to hear them repeat what they thought they heard to someone else in a way that made the meaning quite different?

What about the elderly Vietnamese lady who is cheerful, friendly and wants to please, but does not speak any English? To any questions you ask her she will nod her head, smile broadly and say 'Yes'. Has she understood you? Has effective communication occurred?

When someone else is sending you a message, respond to the communication in ways that ensure that the sender knows you have understood. If you do not understand the message, ask for clarification. Paraphrase what they have said to you to ensure that both of you know that you have understood.

When you are sending or receiving a message, actively listen to the receiver's responses; observe the body language and the para-language they use in responding to you.

Wherever necessary, ask them to explain to you (repeat back or paraphrase) what you have just said. This will help to endorse understanding.



Assessment activity 6

Explain what paraphrasing means and why it is important to paraphrase instructions or requests from workmates or customers.

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Section 3: Draft written information

This section addresses the following performance criteria:

- Identify relevant procedures and formats for written information
- Draft and present assigned written information for approval, ensuring it is written clearly, concisely and within designated timeframes
- Ensure written information meets required standards of style, format and detail
- Seek assistance and/or feedback to aid communication skills development



Learning prompt

Read through the material, look at the assessment activities.

After learners have read and understood the information provided they should take the opportunity to practise the skills referred to within this section prior to undertaking the assessment activities. Trainer/ assessors should give guidance in this regard.

This will enable learners to build and improve their skills.



Identify relevant procedures and formats for written information and ensure written information meets required standards of style, format and detail

Written communication

Written communication, for both internal and external applications, will be used in a workplace. You might need, for instance, to write customer quotes, request information or goods from suppliers, advise technical staff of repair/ service requirements; write letters, summaries and reports; write equipment, training or safety instruction sheets; respond to customer queries or complaints etc. Written communications must be clear, concise and legible. This will save time and frustration.

Written communication should be pitched at the correct level and achieve the intended purpose; that is, to be understood and acted upon by the person receiving them.

Sound written material is free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. It is formatted correctly, with properly constructed sentences, in compliance with organisational requirements. Appropriate language use helps to ensure reader understanding and supports the credibility of the writer. **No matter how good your ideas are, if they are poorly presented many readers will discount them.**

Business documents

In business many forms of written communication are used on a daily basis, common documents include:

- letters
- memos
- messages/ telephone messages
- forms
- email
- facsimiles

There are protocols that apply to all of these communications. You need to know what they are and you also need to know when to use the various forms of written communication – the circumstances under which the various formats will be relevant.

Writing principles

You will be required, in a workplace, to utilise written communications – for both internal and external communication - requesting information from other departments, advising technical staff of repair/ service requirements, passing on instructions, perhaps writing itineraries, writing letters to interest groups, taking and passing on written messages, writing summaries and reports etc. For example, in the case where a school has requested that your organisation participate in a school fete, you might need to write to the school in order to either ask for more information or to confirm arrangements. Your writing must be clear and easily understood. If you need to ask questions about times, space provided for vehicles and displays, availability of water etc, the questions must be constructed in ways that do not generate confusion.

Sound business writing must be:

- readable (understandable because of its clear style of writing) and legible
- appropriate (using language suitable for the reader to easily understand)
- understandable to the reader (language or concepts suited to the audience)
- free of slang terms, inappropriate technical jargon, abbreviations or acronyms that would not be understood by the reader
- mechanically sound - (correct grammar, sentence construction, paragraph construction and spelling)
- concise and pertinent (avoid useless repetition or irrelevancies)
- set out in a straightforward, easily read fashion, business writing is intended to be functional rather than decorative

Taking time to (hand) write neatly, concisely and legibly and set out messages, letters and memos correctly saves on time and frustration. It prevents confusion and the mistakes that can be caused by poor communication.

Written communications must achieve the purpose for which they were intended, and convey the information required of them, at levels that can be understood and acted upon by the prospective audience.

Set out and structure written presentations according to the standards required by your workplace.

Handwritten letters should be neat, tidy and legible.

Writing is a basic skill for anyone within a business environment. Being able to write effectively makes you more useful to an organisation and improves workplace communication. Writing poorly can be costly - it can lead to mistakes, wrong decisions, and confusion. It can damage your organisation's reputation.

Types of written communication

Determine the purpose of the communication you intend to write, and consider the characteristics of the audience at whom it is aimed - that is, the person/s with whom you wish to communicate.

Consider:

1. What does the audience (receiver) already know?
2. What are the reader's attitudes?
3. What are the reader's needs?
4. What is the reader's relationship to your organisation - or yourself?
5. What authority do you have to give your written communication credibility?

Sentence and paragraph construction

Written communications are generally structured around sentences and paragraphs.

Sentence length affects readability. If a sentence is too long, the reader tends to forget the beginning before reaching the end. Good comprehension is achieved through the use of sentences with 14-25 words. In situations where comprehension must be achieved quickly, such as with public notices, a maximum sentence length of 10 words is recommended.

A paragraph is a group of sentences, or a single sentence, which deals with the main idea or section of a topic.

The basic construction of a business communication paragraph is as follows:

- main point sentence (as short as possible)
- explanation
- expansion
- examples

Sentences must follow on from each other in a logical sequence. Paragraphs should flow logically from one to the other.

Grammar and punctuation

Sound written material is free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and is formatted correctly. Communication is effective if we follow the correct conventions of our language. Using language correctly helps to ensure reader understanding and improves the credibility of the writer. If you are communicating to express ideas, make suggestions to put across a point of view, it will not matter how good your ideas are; if they are poorly presented many readers will discount them.

It is important to check the accuracy of information - especially times, dates, figures, amounts of money and telephone numbers. Sloppy work is discourteous - it shows a lack of care in your attitude towards your readers, making them feel unimportant. Written communication provides a permanent record of the information supplied. Both the sender and the receiver can keep a hard copy plus in many cases where computer technology is used, an electronic copy, of correspondence for future reference.

Written communication enables:

- complex subjects to be fully explained and clarified
- copies to be sent to several people
- the contents to be planned, drafted and verified and/or authorised in advance



Assessment activity 7

1. What do you need to consider when preparing to develop written work communications?

S

A

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2. How do you identify and follow relevant procedures and formats to ensure that written information meets required standards of style, format and detail?
- 3.

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Draft and present assigned written information for approval, ensuring it is written clearly, concisely, meets required standards of style, format and detail, and within designated timeframes

Steps in presenting written information:

- collect and organise all relevant information
- plan the document
- draft the document
- proofread and edit the document
- confirm authorisation
- draw up and proofread the final copy

When planning the document consider:

- the purpose of the document
- the type and quantity of information you need to convey
- the audience

Plan the content:

- make rough drafts to organise ideas and structure
- create detailed outlines where appropriate
- choose words carefully and write simple, direct prose
- construct sentences and paragraphs so that they are unified and coherent
- ensure that your writing is appropriate to the context
- determine type of document that will best suit all of these requirements

Write the first draft using plain English:

- identify the letter's purpose in the subject line of the opening paragraph, the opening paragraph sets the scene for the rest of the letter
- state the details in the middle paragraphs - start a new paragraph for each new topic
- clearly identify any expected outcome or any action required by the reader
- conclude the content with a brief summary if necessary
- sign off with a statement of goodwill –'regards', 'yours sincerely' etc

Editing and formatting the document

Before you distribute any written correspondence, proofread, checking for any mistakes or misinformation. Sometimes it is a good idea to have someone else do the proofreading, as they are more likely to pick up on your errors.

Check the language you have used:

1. Have you used many words when a few would do?
2. Have you used definite, specific terms or have you used vague indefinite terms.
3. Have you repeated yourself?
4. Is the tone suitable?
5. Have you used complete sentences, each one of which makes sense on its own?
6. Have you separated the contents into suitable paragraphs?

Check the spelling, punctuation and grammar. Poor grammar, sentence construction and incorrect spelling are an excellent way of losing credibility. They indicate a lack of professionalism and care for your work. The reader will make judgments, based on these things, about your attitude and competence. Remember that when writing a letter you are representing the organisation for which you work. The impression that you need to give is one of professional integrity. If in doubt, use a dictionary. Set the computer spell check for Australian – not American – spelling and remember that you still need to proofread everything. Spellcheck is not infallible.

Consider the visual impact of your document. The way the document looks can make a good impression, and encourage the reader to respond in a certain way.

Use the organisation's letterhead for official correspondence.

If you use a computer the size and type of headings within a document must be consistent. Headings are used to attract the reader's eye, not to confuse them.

Each organisation will probably have a set format, font size and style guides which are to be used consistently, throughout the organisation, for computer generated correspondence.

Do not use very small type sizes (less than 10 point) - particularly if you are writing to elderly people.

Limit the use of bold, italic and underlining - they should only be used to highlight something important.

Do not use upper case letters for sentences. SENTENCES IN CAPITAL LETTERS ARE HARDER TO READ.

Avoid large amounts of coloured or shaded text as it is difficult to read and copy.

Do not overcrowd the document - leave plenty of white space around the text.

Make headings informative and to the point.

Balance the writing on your document pages so that the text is not crammed at either the top or at the bottom of the page.

Electronic mail

Email - internet and intranet communications are used in most organisations these days.

The combination of computer and telephone technology enables instantaneous communication between disparate people – from office to office, from one section of an organisation to another, to other organisations or individuals who are based locally, interstate or overseas. Electronic messages are sent, using telephonic technology, from one computer to another. The monitor (screen) is the medium on which a typed message is displayed. Hard copies of the communication can also be printed.

Electronic mail is useful for sending messages at any time of the day or night. This can be particularly beneficial when sending messages abroad, where time differences apply. For instance, when it is 12 midday in England it is 12 midnight in New Zealand.

Email should be treated the same as any other form of correspondence and should be professional and courteous.

There are a number of advantages to email including:

1. It is faster and more efficient than ordinary mail.
2. It can be sent to different receivers at the same time.
3. It saves paper.
4. Documents or files can be attached to the email.
5. You do not need to spend time waiting for someone else to be available to answer a telephone before you can communicate.

The layout of an email is the frame for your message. When you write an email it should contain the following parts:

1. Greeting.
2. Receiver's name (and employment position if relevant).
3. Sender's name.
4. Subject.
5. Date.
6. The body or content of the message.
7. Sign-off.
8. Email address.
9. Other relevant contact details.
10. A confidentiality statement or disclaimer if required.

Be aware that what you write and send electronically is permanent and accessible to others. It can be printed, forwarded, or read over the phone or posted on the internet. Confidential information, however, can be encrypted, encoded or protected by security systems where necessary.

Fax

The fax or facsimile machine works in a similar way to electronic mail. Fax machines utilise telephone connections to transmit information. Text, pictures, diagrams, drawings and legal documents can be sent via fax. Information from a document which is fed into the fax machine is copied by the machine and electronically transmitted to another fax or to a computer which produces a print-out of the original document.

Most organisations have a standard format for faxed information. It provides specific information about the message and the message sender.

Courtesy

Courteous writing is both polite and respectful. This means displaying good manners and respect for the other person's concerns or feelings. Put yourself into the place of the receiver of your letter. Would you like to receive it? How would you react to it?

Remember to use the simple courtesies like 'please' and 'thankyou' when you write. This applies to faxes, memos, letters, email and messages.

Avoid aggressive or confrontational expressions such as:

1. You say that...
2. You claim that...
3. You are in error...
4. You failed to...
5. You didn't

Para-language applies to the written word as well as the spoken word. Tone and attitude will be conveyed by the way you introduce requests, structure ideas and ask for information or responses. The tone of your writing will convey a great deal about who you are, and how you feel about your job, the situation and other people.

Internal communications

Informal notes or messages

If you need to get a message to a colleague within your organisation who is not available to speak with, an intranet message or a handwritten or typed note can be used.

Even if it is handwritten, the message should be clear and easy to read. It should, as in the case of passing on telephone messages, give the date and time of the message, your name, and the name of the person to whom you are writing, the reason for the message and any action required.

Memos

A memorandum - memo for short - is a more formal way of passing on information within the organisation. Memorandums can be sent out from headquarters, to all organisations to pass on information, for example, service directives. Memos can be either electronic or hardcopy. They can be sent from one person to another, or from one department to another and should be formatted on the organisation's memo forms.

A copy of a memo is usually taken for the sender's file.

A memo contains the following headings:

1. To (who the memo is intended for).
2. Cc (carbon copy - the names of other people receiving the memo).
3. From (who the memo is from).
4. Date (when the memo was sent).
5. Subject (what the memo is about).

Policies

It is important to understand policy dictates in regard to documentation; for example, use of company letterhead or stationery, email and internet use, and placing of notices on internal boards.

Some companies restrict who is able to produce written documents; others ensure that all correspondence is checked and authorised before it is sent out. Ensure that you know your organisational requirements for producing and distributing correspondence. Any written communication is a legal record.

Be aware of the legislation, codes of practice and standards that apply to written communication, including Privacy law and Copyright law. Know who you are authorised to communicate with, what you are authorised to communicate, how it should be done and who should check or sign-off on your correspondence.

Forms

Forms have a variety of uses in the work environment.

For instance, they:

1. Provide a standard platform for setting out information about people or events, eg familiarisation visits, incident and accident reports etc.
2. Provide a standardised platform for keeping records (fire assessments, human resource data, training records).
3. Can be used to record a wide range of facts and figures or show statistical information (eg staff turnover, absenteeism, materials or stock records, budgets).
4. Can be used to communicate precise information.
5. Make it easier to access and analyse information and make fact-based decisions because it is compressed into a specific type of content.
6. Can be used to request information or resources (Organisation requisition forms which are faxed into the store on a weekly basis).

Standard forms can be professionally printed, or designed on a computer, stored electronically and printed as required. They can be 'locked' so they can only be changed or amended by authorised personnel.

When designing a form, consider the following:

- the purpose of the form
- what type of person will use the form
- the information required on the form
- the layout of the form
- the questions to be asked

A key point to remember is to leave enough space for answers to be inserted. There is nothing more infuriating than trying to fill in a form where insufficient space has been left.

Do not ask for redundant or repetitive information. Make sure that the intention of the form is clear and that questions relating to the information to be inserted are easily read and understood.

When filling in forms ensure:

- legibility of writing
- that information is inserted into the correct spaces
- that forms are filled in so that all the necessary information is inserted (incomplete information will result in either the form being returned to be re-done, or the wrong resource/ information etc being sent in response this is inefficient in terms of both time and effort)
- follow the correct procedures for submission, filing and distribution of forms
- if you do not know what information to insert or what should be done with the form once it is completed, ask your supervisor



Assessment activity 8

1. What steps should be followed when preparing written information in a workplace?

S

A

2. Why is para-language important to written communication?

M

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L

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3. Why is it important that you find out what authority you have and what the protocols are for written communication – both internally and externally?

S

A

4. List some expectations with regard to letters (set out, formatting etc) and to electronic mail within a workplace.

M

P

L

E



Seek assistance and/or feedback to aid communication skills development

A large proportion of your credibility as a good communicator revolves around presentation – your personal presentation, posture and the attitude you project; plus the language level, grammar, and sentence construction you use.

Clothing should be neat, tidy and complete. Personal cleanliness and presentation tell people a great deal about your attitude.

Rightly or wrongly, we all make judgments about people, based on the way they look. A business person who is sloppily dressed, obviously does not use deodorant or who uses poor grammar when communicating with the public, is presenting an uncaring image. The assumption is that if they do not care about their appearance, then they do not care about their job.

Incorrect speech forms - using words and phrases like 'youse', 'I – we seen...', 'I-we done...'etc – or mispronouncing commonly used words, encourages a poor image, loss of credibility and an assumption of low levels of competence. There is no reason why you cannot use correct language forms. You are a professional. There is, by the way, no such word as 'youse' in the English language. The plural of 'you' is 'you'. The past tense of the verb 'to see' is 'I-we saw...'. The past tense of the verb 'to do' is 'I-we did...'.
S
A

Posture also contributes to a professional image. Stand up straight and walk briskly. Look like you have a purpose and are interested in what you are doing. If you slouch, drag your feet along the ground when walking or walk too slowly, you project a casual, disinterested image.
M

As all of these things contribute to your communication skills, it is a good idea to ask for feedback – from workmates and from supervisors, about these areas of your presentation and about your communication skills. Try to identify your strengths and your weaknesses. Build on your strengths and develop strategies for overcoming your weaknesses. Ask for ongoing feedback so that you can measure how well you are progressing.
P
L
E



Assessment activity 9

1. What do you consider are your strengths as a communicator?

S

2. What are your weaknesses?

A

3. Develop a plan or strategy for overcoming your weaknesses.

M

4. What feedback will you ask for regarding these intended improvements? How do you think this will aid in improving your communication skills?

P

L

E

Part 2: Assessment information



Introduction to competency assessment

To be assessed as competent learners must under the guidance of qualified trainers and assessors provide evidence which demonstrates that they can perform to the necessary standard. An assessment of competence requires learners to consistently and over time demonstrate the skills, attitude and knowledge that enable confident completion of workplace tasks in a variety of situations.

In judging evidence, the assessor must ensure that the evidence is:

- authentic (the candidate's own work)
- valid (directly related to the current version of the relevant endorsed unit of competency)
- reliable (shows that the candidate consistently meets the endorsed unit of competency)
- current (reflects the candidate's current capacity to perform the aspect of the work covered by the endorsed unit of competency), and
- sufficient (covers the full range of elements in the relevant unit of competency and addresses the four dimensions of competency, namely task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills, and job/role environment skills).

Access and equity

An individual's access to the assessment process should not be adversely affected by restrictions placed on the location or context of assessment beyond the requirements specified in the training package. Reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure equity in assessment for people with disabilities. Adjustments include any changes to the assessment process or context that meet the individual needs of the person with a disability, but do not change competency outcomes.

Such adjustments are considered reasonable if they do not impose an unjustifiable hardship on a training provider or employer. When assessing people with disabilities, assessors are encouraged to apply good practice assessment methods with sensitivity and flexibility.

Assessors should also provide alternative assessment activities to address identified specific organisation requirements.

The assessment process must:

- provide for valid, reliable, flexible and fair assessment
- provide for judgement to be made on the basis of sufficient evidence
- offer valid, authentic and current evidence
- include workplace requirements as suggested in the range of variables

Unit information

Unit code	BSBCMM101A
Unit title	Apply basic communication skills
Unit descriptor	This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to develop communication skills in the workplace. It covers gathering, conveying and receiving information, along with completing assigned written information under direct supervision.
Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements	No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.
Employability skills	This unit contains employability skills.
Application of the Unit	This unit applies to individuals developing basic skills and knowledge of workplace communication in preparation for working in a broad range of settings.
Unit sector or competency field	No sector assigned
Pre Requisite, Co-requisite or Interdependent assessment of units	None specified.
Context of and specific resources for assessment	<p>Assessment must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ access to an actual workplace or simulated environment ▪ access to office equipment and resources ▪ access to examples of documents relating to workplace ▪ communication policies and procedures
Method of assessment:	<p>A range of assessment methods should be used to assess practical skills and knowledge. The following examples are appropriate for this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ direct questioning combined with review of portfolios of evidence and third party workplace reports of on-the-job performance by the candidate ▪ analysis of responses to case studies and scenarios ▪ demonstration of techniques ▪ observation of presentations ▪ oral or written questioning to assess knowledge of organisational policies, plans and procedures ▪ review of written information.



Part 3: Assessment tools

Assessment tools in this learner guide

The tools in this resource provide a foundation on which to build a comprehensive learning and assessment program. However trainer/ assessors will need to adapt or supplement these tools where appropriate.

The assessment tools provided in this resource are:

- the assessment activities in the workbook
- the written/oral questions in this section of the workbook
- the project(s) in this section of the workbook
- supervisor/ third party or assessor demonstration report

In addition an appendix is provided which allows for:

1. Assessment mapping
2. Assisting the trainer to devise and facilitate learning activities and/ or assessment activities which build upon the underpinning knowledge acquired by reading through, and reflecting upon, the text.
3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
4. Evidence gathering and recording at any stage of the training

The **Appendix – Competency review tool** can be used for collecting, recording and submitting a **portfolio of evidence** for RPL.

Assessment tool 1 (AT1): Assessment activities

Assessment activities are designed to enable assessment against the performance criteria or a group of performance criteria within each element.

In general, the assessment activities might consist of:

- questions assessing knowledge
- demonstration of skills
- case studies
- practical activities

Responses to the assessment activities might be drawn from:

- the theory/ information contained in this resource
- additional reading and research
- supplementary materials provided by the trainer/assessor
- practical experience

The learner should complete the assessment activities as directed by the assessor. This may involve recording responses in this workbook or providing responses in a different format eg in a word processed document.

Feedback

The assessment activities should become part of a formative assessment. The RTO and its trainer/ assessors should have processes in place to provide feedback and reinforcement to learners as they progress through the activities and the assessment processes.

This is a commercial publication designed to cover a range of industry sectors/ organisations.

The trainer/ assessor should therefore consider each activity in the context of the specific industry sector and or organisation and make adjustments or contextualise as necessary. Access and equity issues should also be considered.

Assessment tool 2 (AT2): Written/ oral questions

Written/ oral questions are designed to enable assessment of the required knowledge. Where appropriate they may also enable assessment of elements and performance criteria

As with assessment activities responses might be drawn from:

- the theory/ information contained in this resource
- additional reading and research
- supplementary materials provided by the trainer/assessor
- practical experience

Again, as with assessment activities the learner should present responses as directed by the assessor.

Trainer/ assessors might develop additional questions to elicit more detailed responses. Alternative questioning methods might also be used where Access and equity issues need to be considered.

Assessment tool 3 (AT3): Project(s)

Project(s) are designed to enable holistic assessment of the unit of competence if possible. The trainer/ assessor should consider each project in the context of the specific industry sector and or organisation and make adjustments or contextualise as necessary. Access and equity issues should also be considered. Additional projects may also be required.

Assessment tool 4 (AT4): Supervisor / third party or assessor demonstration report

Where the learner is in employment this report should be completed by the learner's supervisor, an appropriate third party or the assessor.

The trainer/ assessor needs to ensure that the supervisor/ third party/ assessor understands that they must confirm that they have observed the learner performing the tasks associated with the elements, performance criteria, critical aspects for assessment and required skills in an efficient manner consistently and over a period of time. They also need to record the context in which the learner was observed and detail any evidence that has been provided.

Where the learner is not in employment and where this resource is used in face- to- face delivery or in a distance mode, assessors may use this tool to record any simulated demonstrations that they have observed that provide evidence that the learner can perform the tasks associated with the elements, performance criteria, critical aspects for assessment and required skills in an efficient manner.

Other assessment activities

Other assessment activities determined by an assessor could include any of the range of assessment activities listed as examples appropriate for this unit under method of assessment in the unit information section of this learner guide eg provision of port folio of evidence.

Trainer/ assessors should ensure that the training and the formative and summative assessments they use sufficiently address:

- the relevant performance criteria
- critical aspects for assessment
- the required skills and knowledge
- the context and consistency of the assessment requirements
- the relevant employability skills

Trainer/ assessors should ensure that the learner fully understand the assessment process and the assessment tasks that need to be undertaken. This can be documented on the assessment cover sheet supplied in this learner guide.

Assessment cover sheet

Assessment for this unit of competence for this learner will be undertaken using the following assessment tools (Tick those tools that will be used)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment activities (AT1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral/ written questioning (AT2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project(s) (AT3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/ third party/ report (AT4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessor demonstration report (AT4) | <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio of evidence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other assessment tasks required (record details) | |

No additional assessment tasks required

Assessor name

Assessor signature

Date

I declare that I understand how assessment will take place for this unit. I also understand that work completed towards this assessment must be verifiably my own.

Learner name

Learner signature

Date

Assessment tool 1 (AT1): Assessment activities summary

This tool relates to the assessment activities which have been completed throughout the learner guide. Trainer/ assessors should use this template to record details of any issues/ feedback they wish to provide to the learner in relation to their responses to the assessment activities. Alternatively trainer/ assessors can record feedback next to assessment activity in the body of the workbook.

I declare that the assessment activities completed in this learner guide are all my own work.

Learner name

Learner signature

Date

Assessor name

Assessor signature

Date

Comments

AMPLE

Assessment tool 2 (AT2): Written/ oral questions

Learners should answer the following questions either orally or in writing as agreed with the trainer/ assessor. If more space is required attach additional pages. Written responses may be recorded in the space provided or entered in a word processing document and attached.

1. There are a number of key provisions of relevant legislation and regulations from all levels of government that that may affect aspects of business operations, such as:
 - anti-discrimination legislation
 - ethical principles
 - codes of practice
 - privacy laws
 - financial legislation
 - occupational health and safety (OHS) legislation
 - consumer law
 - credit procedures legislation and regulations

Why is it necessary to have a working knowledge of the legislation involved in business?

2. How does the Privacy Act impact upon an organisation's ability to collect information for the production of documents?

S
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3. What are the benefits of using procedures? How can staff find information about procedures and how should procedures be taught?

S
A
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P
L
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Assessment tool 3 (AT3): Project(s)

Learners should undertake the following project(s) as directed by the trainer/ assessor.

Project 1

Explain what good or effective communication is and give examples of good and bad communication within the workplace.

Draft sample copies of the following types of correspondence:

- a notification to employees of a staff meeting
- an internal memo regarding the cleaning of the kitchen area by those who use it
- an internal email notifying computer users of a new and dangerous virus

Remember that your communication needs to be written in clear, simple and concise language, with no spelling or grammatical errors, and that the purpose and destination of the communication must be clearly stated. Your correspondence must also show your ability to communicate in a way that responds positively to individual differences.

S

A

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		Evidence provided/ observed/ context	Initial/ date
Critical aspects for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear, concise and correct verbal and written communication 	S	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promptly and appropriately following instructions 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of relevant legislation 		
Required skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication skills to identify lines of communication, to request advice, to effectively question, to follow instructions, to receive feedback, and to convey messages clearly and concisely 	A M P	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally appropriate communication skills to relate to people from diverse backgrounds and to people with diverse abilities 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> literacy skills to identify work requirements, to draft written information and to process basic, relevant workplace documentation 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problem-solving skills to solve routine problems related to the workplace, under direct supervision 		

Supervisor/ third party declaration

I confirm that I have observed the learner perform the tasks associated with the elements, performance criteria, critical aspects for assessment and required skills for this unit efficiently and consistently over a period of time.

Supervisor/ third party name

Supervisor/ third party signature

Date

Assessor declaration

I confirm that I have observed the learner demonstrate the skills associated with the elements, performance criteria, critical aspects for assessment and required skills for this unit competently.

Assessor name

Assessor signature

Date

Learner name

Competency record

After assessment the **competency record** should be completed and signed by the learner, assessor, and the supervisor. If competency is not achieved at the first attempt strategies to address gaps in performance need to be identified and time for reassessment arranged.

Assessment tools used and satisfactory outcomes achieved (Tick)

<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment activities (AT1)	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral/ written questioning (AT2)
<input type="checkbox"/> Project(s) (AT3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/ third party/ report (AT4)
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessor demonstration report (AT4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio of evidence

Other assessment methods used by the RTO and satisfactory outcomes achieved (please detail)

I declare that the assessment tasks completed in this learner guide are all my own work.

Learner name

Learner signature

Date

Supervisor/ third party name

Supervisor/ third party signature

Date

The learner has been assessed as **competent** in the elements and performance criteria, critical aspects for assessment, required skills and knowledge for this unit and the evidence presented is:

<input type="checkbox"/> Authentic	<input type="checkbox"/> Valid	<input type="checkbox"/> Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Current	<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient
------------------------------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Assessor name

Assessor signature

Date

If the Learner is **not yet competent** in this unit – date for reassessment

Strategies to address gaps in performance/ trainee comments

Appendix: Competency review tool

This appendix is a multi purpose tool for:

1. Assessment mapping and validation
2. Identification of supplementary assessment strategies by trainer/ assessors
3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
4. Evidence gathering and recording at any stage of the training

The **Appendix - Competency review tool** can be used for collecting, recording and submitting a **portfolio of evidence** for RPL.

1. Assessment mapping

This identifies how the assessment tools in this resource assess:

- elements and performance criteria
- critical aspects of evidence
- skills and knowledge
- employability skills

It also allows for trainers, assessors and learners to review the range statement and in the circumstance of the learning and assessment determine which factors apply.

2. Identification of supplementary assessment strategies by trainer/ assessors

It should be used by trainers and assessors to:

- validate the assessment tools provided in this resource
- identify and record additional assessment processes that may be needed to supplement the assessment tools provided in this resource
- identify and record additional assessment processes required to address access and equity issues
- identify and record additional assessment processes that may be required to meet specific organisation/ industry requirements

3. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

It should be used by learners to identify and evaluate their existing skills for the purpose of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The learner may identify that they already have some or all of the skills required for this unit prior to or during the training. If they believe they can already demonstrate these skills, they should speak with an assessor about applying for recognition of skills.

This tool can then be used to record the evidence they have of their skills in relation to the elements and performance criteria, critical aspects of evidence, required skills and knowledge and employability skills.

Use of this tool should involve the collection and submission of evidence eg work samples, photographs, reports, references, examples of products made etc. This evidence may be derived from previous paid work experience, volunteer work experience, education or general life experience.

4. Evidence gathering and recording at any stage of the training

During the course of training learners might identify existing strengths that they previously haven't recognised. As with RPL this tool can then be used to record the evidence they have of these skills as they become apparent during the training. This may result in a modification of the assessment process.

Alternatively it may encourage the learner to strengthen their engagement with the full learning experience.

Range statement

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

Trainers and learners should review the range statement and in the circumstance of the learning and assessment determine which of the following factors apply.

	Y/ N		Y/ N
<p>Workplace procedures may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ answering telephone calls ▪ following instructions ▪ informal discussions ▪ requests from colleagues ▪ using internet and email ▪ using voice mail ▪ workplace procedures related to specific tasks <p>Appropriate people may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ colleagues ▪ other staff members ▪ supervisors, mentors, trainers or assessors <p>Lines of communication may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ formal and informal means ▪ verbal or written <p>Communication method/equipment may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ computer network systems ▪ facsimile machines ▪ personal computer equipment including hardware, keyboards, software and communication packages ▪ telephones <p>Written information may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ electronic mail ▪ facsimiles ▪ general correspondence or standard/form letters and memos ▪ handwritten and printed materials ▪ telephone messages or general messages <p>Standards may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ organisational policies ▪ standards set by workgroup 		<p>S</p> <p>A</p> <p>M</p> <p>P</p> <p>L</p> <p>E</p>	

Competency review tool: Elements and performance criteria

Elements of competency: The elements of competency are the basic building blocks of the unit of competency. They describe in terms of outcomes the significant functions and tasks that make up the competency.

Performance criteria: The performance criteria specify the required performance in relevant tasks, roles, skills and in the applied knowledge that enables competent performance.

Element	Performance criteria	Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Identify workplace communication procedures	Identify organisational communication requirements and workplace procedures with assistance from appropriate people	AT1: 1 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4	S	
	Identify appropriate lines of communication with supervisors and colleagues	AT1: 2 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
	Seek advice on the communication method/equipment most appropriate for the task	AT1: 3 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
Communicate in the workplace	Use effective questioning, and active listening and speaking skills to gather and convey information	AT1: 4 AT3: 1 AT4	A M	
	Use appropriate non-verbal behaviour at all times	AT1: 5 AT3: 1 AT4		
	Encourage, acknowledge and act upon constructive feedback	AT1: 6 AT3: 1 AT4		
Draft written information	Identify relevant procedures and formats for written information	AT1: 7 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4	P L E	
	Draft and present assigned written information for approval, ensuring it is written clearly, concisely and within designated timeframes	AT1: 8 AT3: 1 AT4		
	Ensure written information meets required standards of style, format and detail	AT1: 8 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
	Seek assistance and/or feedback to aid communication skills development	AT1: 9 AT3: 1 AT4		

Competency review tool: Critical aspects for assessment

Describes critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

		Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Critical aspects for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear, concise and correct verbal and written communication 	AT1: 1, 2, 5-8 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4	S A	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promptly and appropriately following instructions 	AT1: 4 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of relevant legislation. 	AT2: 1, 2 AT4	L E	

Competency review tool: Required skills

Skills describe the application of knowledge to situations where understanding is converted into a workplace outcome.

		Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Required skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication skills to identify lines of communication, to request advice, to effectively question, to follow instructions, to receive feedback, and to convey messages clearly and concisely 	AT1: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 AT3: 1 AT4	S A M P L E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally appropriate communication skills to relate to people from diverse backgrounds and to people with diverse abilities 	AT1: 2 AT3: 1 AT4		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> literacy skills to identify work requirements, to draft written information and to process basic, relevant workplace documentation 	AT1: 1, 4, 7 AT2: 1, 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problem-solving skills to solve routine problems related to the workplace, under direct supervision 	AT1: 3 AT2: 3 AT4		

Competency review tool: Required knowledge

Knowledge identifies what the person needs to know to perform the work in an informed and effective manner.

		Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Required knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> key provisions of relevant legislation from all forms of government that may affect aspects of business operations, such as privacy laws 	AT2: 1, 2	S A M P L E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organisational policies, plans and procedures 	AT2: 3 AT3: 1		

Competency review tool: Employability skills

Employability skills are integral to effective performance in the workplace and are broadly consistent across industry sectors. How these skills are applied varies between occupations and qualifications due to the different work functions and contexts. Employability skills embedded in this unit should be assessed holistically with other relevant units that make up the skill set or qualification and in the context of the job role.

		Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gathering, conveying and receiving verbal and written information listening and understanding workplace instructions 	AT1: 1-9 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4	S A M P L E	
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> working with colleagues and supervisors to produce workplace documents 	AT1: 6, 7 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resolving simple maintenance issues with office equipment solving routine problems related to hazards in the workplace, while under direct supervision 	AT1: 3, 7 AT4		
Initiative and enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> raising occupational health and safety issues with the occupational health and safety officer 	AT1: 3 AT2: 1 AT3: 1 AT4		

		Assessed in this learning resource by:	Assessment methods used by the RTO	Evidence provided by the learner
Planning and organising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning own work schedule to ensure tasks are completed on time 	AT1: 2, 4, 7, 8 AT3: 1 AT4	S A M P L E	
Self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> behaving in ways that contribute to an effective and safe working environment identifying own roles and responsibilities 	AT1: 1, 5, 9 AT2: 1 AT3: 1 AT4		
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listening to ideas and opinions of other members of the team following safety procedures 	AT2: 3 AT4		
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> operating a range of business equipment 	AT1: 1, 2, 8 AT2: 3 AT3: 1 AT4		