Inclusive Communication

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01.
INTRODUCTION

Inclusive Communication: Building an Inclusive Workplace Culture

Learning Outcome

What You Will Learn Today?

This lesson will help you to define key terms related to inclusive communication, understand the impact of language and tone in the workplace, recognise micro-aggressions and how to avoid them, identify means of intra-personal communication that can help to build an inclusive workplace culture, and understand the importance of non-verbal communication to promote inclusive communication.

Lesson/Topic Headings

The following topics will be covered in this lesson:

- Key Terms for Inclusive Communication

- Impact of Language and Tone in the Workplace

- Micro-aggressions and Micro-affirmations

- Intra-personal Communication and Non-verbal Communication

- Active Listening

Inclusive Communication

Inclusion means more than just having a diverse mix of people in an organisation. It is about creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and appreciated

Inclusive Communication is an approach that seeks to "create a supportive and effective communication environment, using all available means of communication to understand and be understood".

Promoting Inclusive Communication in the Workplace

- **Active listening:** Be aware of where there might be barriers in the first place. You could start by considering unconscious bias.

- **Awareness:** Be aware of where there might be barriers in the first place. You could start by considering unconscious bias.

- **Consider Your Audience:** Adapt to any specific needs of the people you are seeking to communicate with.

- **Inclusive Language:** Avoid using language that reinforces stereotypes, or unintentionally discriminate.

- **Inclusive Leadership:** If you are manager, you have responsibility for promoting inclusive communication styles, for making workplace expectations clear and for creating a welcoming and open culture in your organisation

- **Develop empathy:** This will help you to see things from others' perspectives and communicate better

Micro-aggressions and Micro- affirmations

- **Micro-aggressions** describe small yet offensive behaviours or remarks against a marginalised group.

- **Micro-affirmations** are small positive actions and comments that demonstrate that we care about our colleagues. They include nods, facial expressions, choices of words, and tones of voice that convey inclusion, caring, and listening.

02.
ACTIVITIES

➢ Exploring Key Terms

➢ Impact of Language and Tone

➢ Micro-aggressions and Micro-affirmations

➢ Non-verbal Communication

Activity 1 - Exploring Key Terms

This activity aims to help learners define key terms related to inclusive communication such as cultural competence, active listening, and empathy.

Activity 1 Instructions

Step 1 Trainer will describe the key terms related to inclusive communication such as cultural competence, active listening, and empathy.

Step 2 Trainer will provide examples of each term and encourage participants to share their own examples.

Step 3 Participants receive handouts and are asked them to write down their own definitions of each term.

Activity 2: Impact of Language and Tone in the Workplace

This activity is designed to help learners understand how language and tone can influence workplace relationships and culture.

Activity 2 Instructions

Step 1 Discuss the impact of language and tone in the workplace and how it can influence workplace relationships and culture.

Step 2 Watch videos of different communication styles and ask participants to identify the tone and its impact.

Step 3 Role-play different communication scenarios, including positive and negative tone.

Activity 3: Micro-aggressions and Micro-affirmations

In this activity, we will explore micro-aggressions and micro-affirmations, and how they can impact workplace relationships and culture. Micro-aggressions are subtle, often unintentional acts of discrimination, while micro-affirmations are acts of inclusion that validate a person's identity and worth. By recognising these behaviours, we can create a more inclusive workplace culture.

Activity 3 Instructions

Step 1 Define micro-aggressions and provide examples of how they can manifest in the workplace.

Step 2 Discuss how micro-affirmations can be used to mitigate the impact of micro-aggressions.

Step 3 Provide case studies of workplace scenarios and ask participants to identify examples of micro-aggressions and micro-affirmations.

Activity 4: Non-verbal Communication

In this activity, we will explore ways to build inclusive communication skills in the workplace. We will focus on non-verbal communication, such as body language and facial expressions, and how they can promote inclusive communication. We will also discuss how to adapt communication to meet the needs of others, and how to manage intra-personal communication to build an inclusive workplace culture.

Activity 4 **Instructions**

Step 1 Discuss the importance of non-verbal communication including body language, facial expressions, and tone.

Step 2 Receive role-playing cards with different communication scenarios, role-play different scenarios while incorporating non-verbal communication.

Step 3 Practice adapting their communication style to meet the needs of different people.

Active Listening (Overview)

Active listening is of key importance for inclusive communication. Some of its main features are:

- Set the context and establish rapport

- Focus on the speaker and maintain eye contact

- Demonstrate understanding through verbal and non-verbal cues

- Summarise and clarify

- Respond appropriately and avoid interrupting

Activity 5 **Instructions**

Step 1 Listen to a short lecture on active listening, defining it and its importance for inclusive communication in the workplace.

Step 2 Split into small groups and discuss a scenario, where one person actively listens to the other and then summarises what they heard.

Step 3 Present a summary of the scenario and receive feedback.

Practicing active listening

- This activity involves a guided practice to develop active listening skills that will facilitate an inclusive working environment.

Activity 6 Instructions

Step 1 Pair up and share a personal experience or story to your partner while they listen actively.

Step 2 After the speaker is finished, the listener summarises what they heard and shares their thoughts and feelings about what they heard.

Step 3 Participants switch roles and repeat the exercise.

Identifying Barriers to Active Listening

- This activity aims to help participants identify common communication barriers in the workplace and explore ways to overcome them.

Activity 7 Instructions

Step 1 Listen to a short lecture on common barriers to active listening, such as distractions and biases.

Step 2 Discuss in small groups the barriers they face when trying to actively listen in their workplace.

Step 3 Present you list of barriers and receive feedback.

Activity 8 **Instructions**

Step 1 Share your personal strategies for overcoming barriers to active listening and discuss as a group.

Step 2 Receive additional tips for overcoming barriers and share your own tips.
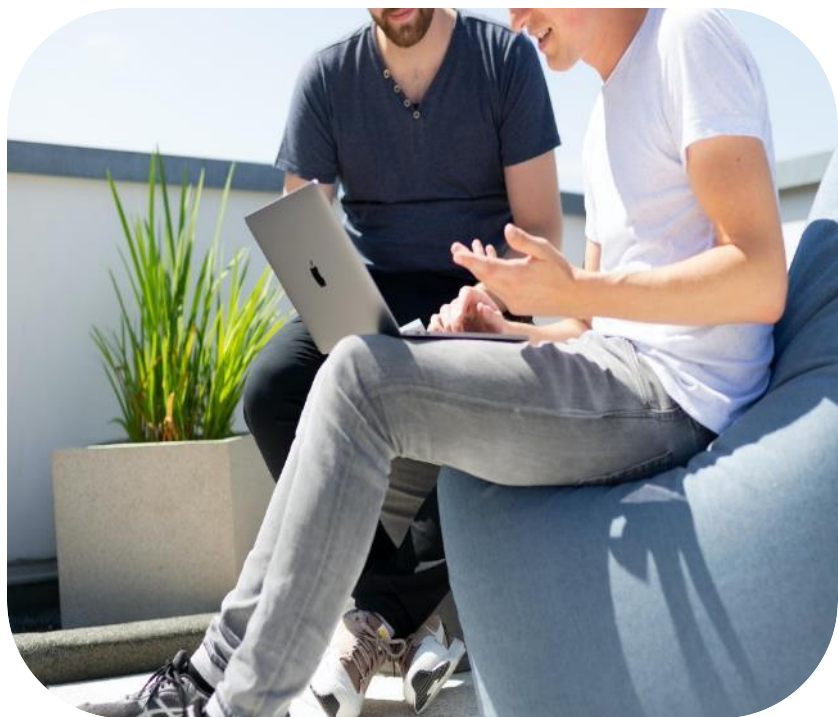
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REFLECTION

What Did We Learn?

- What was your biggest takeaway from today's workshop, and how do you plan to apply it in your workplace?

- What strategies will you use to recognise and respond to micro-aggressions, and promote micro-affirmations, in your workplace?

- What did you learn about active listening and its role in promoting inclusive communication in the workplace?

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CONCLUSION

What do we now know?

By the end of this workshop, you should have a better understanding of the key concepts related to inclusive communication, including cultural competence, active listening, empathy, and non-verbal communication. You should be able to recognise micro-aggressions and micro-affirmations in the workplace, and have strategies for responding to them. You should also be able to adapt your communication to meet the needs of others, and manage intra-personal communication to build an inclusive workplace culture. You should now be able to identify communication barriers, demonstrate active listening skills, and apply strategies to overcome these barriers.

THANK YOU