

# Design Brief

## Background

First Impressions Resources **fir** is an Australian registered training organisation (RTO), specialising in the flexible delivery of retail qualifications and staff development solutions. With a team of experienced trainers located throughout Australia, **fir** is working with some of the country's leading retailers to develop the skills and capabilities of their staff. For more than 24 years, **fir** has specialised in workplace-based training and assessment services for retailers, providing them with trained staff and developing their existing workforce.

In 2013 **fir** will introduce new training products, launch an online learning solution, expand operations to India and celebrate 25 years in business. At the same time the Australian retail market will continue to undergo change with the rapid expansion of on-line platforms and growth in global brands.

Fir's qualifications span entry level certificates through to management and leadership Diplomas, with general and specialist sector programs such as Visual merchandising and Pharmacy qualifications available.

## **fir facts...**

**fir** was established in 1988

Trainers with real-world retail experience - **fir** only employs trainers with significant retail experience and a passion for developing people. This helps ensure an approach to training that is relevant to our clients and their employees, and a learning environment that is supportive of all levels of staff.

**fir** is proud of its progress with school-based trainees with over 300 currently in Australia. These students include previous winners of the School based Trainee of the Year and The Prime Ministers Award for Skills Excellence.

In 2012 **fir** was the winner of two prestigious awards-

- Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) - Industry Initiative Award
- Service Skills Australia – Excellence Awards –Industry Collaboration

## Purpose

The objective of the design project is to develop a design concept and collateral, which will be utilised to:

- Reinforce fir as the leading RTO in the delivery of retail training in Australia whilst at the same time supporting our expansion into a more Global retail market
- boost awareness and increase market presence of the fir brand, introducing it into broader service applications.
- deliver a consistent brand message through marketing, PR and learning and assessment resources.
- update and create tools and/or marketing materials that will increase fir's professional presence within the retail sector and increasingly into the broader service sectors.

We do not want to completely re-invent ourselves, we have a respected history that we need to build on, however this is an opportunity to broaden our market with new products and a new approach. An informed renovation!

The outcome of the design project will be applied across all of the fir communications tools, including-

- Website
- Newsletters
- Course brochures/flyers
- Social media
- Student resources, texts and
- Online learning environment and resources.

## Target market

We are broadening our target market, from the retail employer being the primary target to include other service related industry employers eg Tourism operators. Increasingly students (prospective and current) will become our primary market. These students will be currently working in retail or looking at entering into service related industries.

As a secondary target market we need to consider the following audience (stakeholders):

- Government departments as purchasers
- Schools
- 

## Branding key messages

- **fir** is passionate about skilling the service workforce with a focus on the customer experience, delivering high quality innovative training solutions which meet industry needs
- **fir** graduates walk away with real skills, industry experience and Australian recognized qualifications
- **fir** graduates deliver exceptional customer service
- **fir** is a first class facility delivering industry ready retail skills
- **fir** is an award winning RTO recognized nationally as an Industry specialist.

## Copy (text) and pictures

Prefer not to change the **fir** logos and colours, though some modification/modernisation to existing may be suggested. Images used need to be of high quality, photographs should include service staff in action and emphasise people interacting wherever possible. (Attach samples) It is recommended that you view our website [www.fir.edu.au](http://www.fir.edu.au).

## Competition deliverables

The outputs required for the competition are as follows:

Design concept, including: A4 size textbook cover design; A4 marketing brochure design; Powerpoint slide design (this will also inform design of e-learning frames/LMS themes).

These are required in PDF format, however the competition winner will be required to provide print-based materials in INDD format and all elements in native formats, e.g. PPT, JPG, PNG, etc.



The Retail industry is Australia's largest employer. To progress in the retail industry employees must learn to efficiently meet the needs of external and internal customers. Meeting this challenge is the key to improving workplace skills and to developing responsibilities for others within the team. This qualification is ideal for people who have developed basic skills and knowledge as retail sales people and are keen to take up supervisory roles that require the essential skills needed to monitor teams effectively.

To achieve the Certificate III in Retail a total of ten (10) units must be completed.

### Maintain Store Standards

*All 3 units below must be included, plus either the Supervisory Units or the Operational Units*

- Maintain store safety
- Maintain store security
- Coordinate interaction with customers

### Supervisory Elective Units

- Contribute to team effectiveness
- Coordinate work teams
- Coordinate merchandise presentation
- Coordinate sales performance
- Maintain and order stock
- Organise personal work priorities and development
- Recommend specialist products and services

<sup>^</sup> If not already completed at Certificate II level

[s] Indicates that advanced operational skills and/or a supervisory level role is required

The above course outline is an example developed to meet industry standards.

### Operational Elective Units

- Balance point of sale terminal <sup>^</sup>
- Operate retail information technology systems
- Deliver and monitor a service to customers
- Develop innovative ideas at work
- Maintain and order stock
- Organise personal work priorities and development
- Recommend specialist products and services

### Alternative Elective Units

- Sell products and services <sup>^</sup>
- Create a display <sup>^</sup>



### A day in the life of....

Claire has been working in a retail store as a Sales Assistant for about 2 years. She enjoys her job and is confident looking after customers and recommending products, using the terminal and contributing as a team member. Her role has been increasing in responsibility and she will soon be moving into a supervisory role.

Claire is enrolled in a Certificate III in Retail where she is learning new skills including organising rosters and running meetings. She has also learnt how to audit the store for safety and security compliance, order and display merchandise and balance the register terminal. Her communication skills have developed so she is more confident when supporting team members, interacting with customers and reporting to management.

Claire is looking forward to her new role and feels that completing her national qualification will assist her to become an efficient supervisor.





The Australian Retail Food sector is highly competitive. To progress in the retail industry employees must learn to efficiently meet the needs of external and internal customers. Meeting this challenge is the key to improving workplace skills and to developing responsibilities for others within the team. This qualification is ideal for people who have developed basic skills and knowledge as retail sales people and are keen to develop the essential skills needed to take on extra responsibilities as a senior team member or a supervisor.

To achieve the Certificate III in Retail a total of ten (10) units must be completed.

### Maintain Store Standards

*All 3 units below must be included, plus either the Supervisory Units or the Operational Units*

- Maintain store safety
- Maintain store security
- Coordinate interaction with customers

### Supervisory Elective Units

- Contribute to team effectiveness
- Coordinate work teams
- Coordinate merchandise presentation
- Coordinate sales performance
- Maintain and order stock
- Monitor food safety program #
- Receive and store kitchen supplies # ^

^ If not already completed at Certificate II level [s] Indicates that advanced operational skills and/or a supervisory level role is required  
# A different prerequisite food hygiene unit applies to each of these units and can be completed as an extra unit when undertaking this course

The above course outline is an example developed to meet industry standards.

### Operational Elective Units

- Organise personal work priorities and development
- Develop innovative ideas at work
- Operate retail information technology systems
- Deliver and monitor a service to customers
- Balance point of sale terminal ^
- Monitor food safety program #
- Receive and store kitchen supplies # ^

### Alternative Elective Unit

- Sell products and services ^



### A day in the life of....

Bill has been working in a busy retail food store for two years. Since starting his job, Bill has learned how to look after stock and customers and how to work cooperatively in a team. More recently, Bill has been promoted to a supervisory position in his store and enrolled in a Certificate III in Retail qualification.

Bill has been learning the skills that go with supervising other people including how to develop staff rosters and run team meetings. At first it was difficult to supervise the people who used to be his team mates, but now he is quite confident.

Bill has learned so much about working in a business, including complying with food safety legislation, auditing the store for safety compliance and also managing customer complaints. Bill enjoys his role as supervisor and hopes to be promoted to an assistant-manager in the future.





first impressions resources  
the australian retail college



# Contribute to team effectiveness

## BSBFLM312C

### Certificate III

### Skills Text



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



## About this booklet

Welcome to the *Skills Text* for unit BSBFLM312C : Contribute to team effectiveness.

### Icons used

The following icons are used throughout this guide to indicate:

|   |                                   |   |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
|    | <b>Learning Objectives</b>        | List of learning objectives for this chapter  |
|    | <b>Activity</b>                   | A formative activity designed to reinforce the key skills, behaviour and attitudes in the preceding content   |
|    | <b>Definition / Did you know?</b> | A definition or key idea formatted to alert readers attention   |
|    | <b>Discussion</b>                 | A topic for discussion designed to either connect new ideas with old to help assist long term retention or to reinforce ideas through engaging in collaboration |
|   | <b>Important note</b>             | This is an important piece of information   |
|  | <b>Hints of tips</b>              | Helpful hints or tips   |
|  | <b>Formula / Calculation</b>      | A formula or calculation to assist with financial management  |
|  | <b>Online resource</b>            | One or more links to useful resources online  |
|  | <b>Case study</b>                 | Illustrative or investigative activities to reinforce concepts introduced   |
|  | <b>Printed resource</b>           | Details of a hard copy resource that is recommended for further information.  |
|  | <b>Key points</b>                 | A summary of the key points of the chapter  |

### Evaluation Form

Find the evaluation form for this resource in Appendix A: Skills Text Evaluation

## Employability skills



### Employability skills

The following Employability Skills are incorporated into this unit's learning materials and assessments. Employability Skills are broad skills that industry has identified as important skills to be developed by employees.

The following table contains a summary of the employability skills for this unit.

| <b>Employability Skill</b>       | <b>Industry/enterprise requirements for this qualification include</b>   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Communication</b>             | Use questioning and active listening to ascertain and respond to customer needs to ensure customers enjoy a positive experience that reflects business values. Regularly carry out verbal instructions from other team members and supervisors. Read and interpreting simple workplace documents, complete simple written workplace forms and share work related information with other team members.                |
| <b>Teamwork</b>                  | Effectively participate in retail store teams; working independently to complete own tasks and also supporting other team members where appropriate. Lead small retail teams where required in the context of the job role; mentoring and supporting other team members.   |
| <b>Problem solving</b>           | Demonstrate sensitivity to customer needs and concerns anticipating problems and acting to avoid them where possible. Solve a range of operational retail store problems individually or in the context of a team structure where after clarification existing policies and infrastructure may be applied to source information and resources and develop practical and sustainable solutions.                       |
| <b>Initiative and enterprise</b> | Look for opportunities to do things better and suggest ideas to other team members and supervisors in the context of the job role. Translate ideas into action by positively accepting and adapting to changes in procedures or arrangements at the store level.   |
| <b>Planning and organising</b>   | Establish and communicate clear goals and deliverables for self and team members within the context of organisation objectives and the current store situation; and coordinate resources to ensure that work is carried out according to timelines and priorities. Coordinate and or implement changes arising from continuous improvement processes.  |
| <b>Self management</b>           | Understand how a personal job role fits into the context of the wider business values and directions. Work within the store culture by practising inclusive behaviour, effective management of personal presentation, hygiene, and time; and efficiently prioritise and complete delegated tasks. Maintain own knowledge of the job role, review own performance and actively seek and act upon advice and guidance. |
| <b>Learning</b>                  | Identify personal strengths and weaknesses in the context of the job role and recognise how to personally learn best at work. Seek opportunities for formal education in the context of a current role or future retail job opportunities. Accept opportunities to learn new ways of doing things and share knowledge and skills with other store team members.  |
| <b>Technology</b>                | Use of point-of-sale systems and/or select and use a range of other retail technology; in the context of available equipment and store procedures. Recognise and report faulty equipment and follow store occupational health and safety procedures.   |

## About this unit

### Unit name

BSBFLM312C: Contribute to team effectiveness

### Description

This unit applies to frontline managers who have a key role in developing efficient and effective work teams within the context of the organisation. They play a prominent part in motivating, mentoring, coaching and developing team cohesion by providing leadership for the team and forming the bridge between the management of the organisation and the team members.

The required outcomes described in this unit of competency contain applicable facets of Employability Skills.

### Prerequisites

Nil.

### Learning outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Contribute to team outcomes
2. Support team cohesion
3. Participate in work team
4. Communicate with management

Further details on each of these learning outcomes can be viewed at the start of each chapter.

### Completing assessment

This Skills Text contains the essential skills and knowledge required for this unit. Any activities and questions in this Skills Text do not form part of your assessment but have been included to help you develop the necessary competencies. To undertake the assessment please refer to your Skills Assess document or your First Impressions Resources trainer.

Feel free to call your trainer or contact First Impressions Resources if you require assistance:

- **Freecall number: 1800 644 322**

## A day in the life of...

Joel is a team leader for a large retail department store.

Joel works to ensure that he has an organised and efficient team. To manage this he consults with his team to organise the work they are required to do. Joel encourages his team members to make useful contributions to the decision making and operational aspects of the business.

To support the team and assist them to achieve team objectives, Joel acts as a coach and role model, encouraging the team to perform well.

Sometimes Joel needs to speak to his line-manager about staff members' ideas or issues, so they can be considered by the appropriate level of authority. Joel also discusses the team's progress with his staff and gives acknowledgement to staff members who have achieved any important milestones. By keeping the lines of communication open, Joel finds that his team members are more willing to talk to him about ideas or problems, and they seem to work more effectively when they are clear about what is expected of them.



## Chapter 1. Contribute to team outcomes



### Learning objectives

On completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- 1.1 Consult team members to identify team purpose, roles, responsibilities, goals, plans and objectives
- 1.2 Support team members to meet expected outcomes
- 1.3 Encourage team members to participate in the planning, decision making and operational aspects of the work team to their level of responsibility
- 1.4 Identify and address issues, concerns and problems identified by team members to relevant persons as required
- 1.5 Support the team to identify and resolve problems which impede its performance

### Introduction

As a team leader you are not only responsible for organising your own work schedule, you are also required to contribute to the effectiveness of the team. This involves undertaking planning with the team to meet expected outcomes, encouraging the team to take responsibility for their own work schedules and develop team cohesion.

Effective teams require goals that are clear, significant and embraced by all members and this is best done through consultation with the team members. This ensures that:

- a. The team members know that the team has a worthwhile purpose
- b. They know what is expected of them.

Once the team's purpose, responsibility, goals and objectives have been identified, the team then requires the support of the team leader to support the team in undertaking required roles and responsibilities and identify and address concerns and problems.

## Consultation

It is important that you, as the team leader, use a consultative approach to gain team members' input on decisions to be made within the team.

Consultation allows you to discuss with the team members:

- Team goals and purposes
- Roles within the team
- Individual and group responsibilities
- Store plans and objectives
- The current achievement of expected work outcomes

The goals and objectives of the team need to be clearly identified so that everyone knows what is expected of the team as a whole and also what is expected of individual team members.

## Goal setting

Goals and objectives help to determine where the team is going and in what direction it is putting its energy and resources. This is important so that you and your team do not waste energy and resources on activities that are not important.

The goals need to be written so that they are SMART.

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>S</b> | <b>• Specific</b><br>Should specify what needs to be achieved                |
| <b>M</b> | <b>• Measurable</b><br>Should be able to measure achievement                 |
| <b>A</b> | <b>• Achievable</b><br>Should be able to be achieved                         |
| <b>R</b> | <b>• Realistic</b><br>Should be realistic with given resources and timeframe |
| <b>T</b> | <b>• Time based</b><br>Should identify when the target must be achieved      |

Examples of SMART goals are:

- Complete an accurate complete stock take by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010
- Achieve \$500 worth of sales during the month
- Increase staff levels by 10% by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010

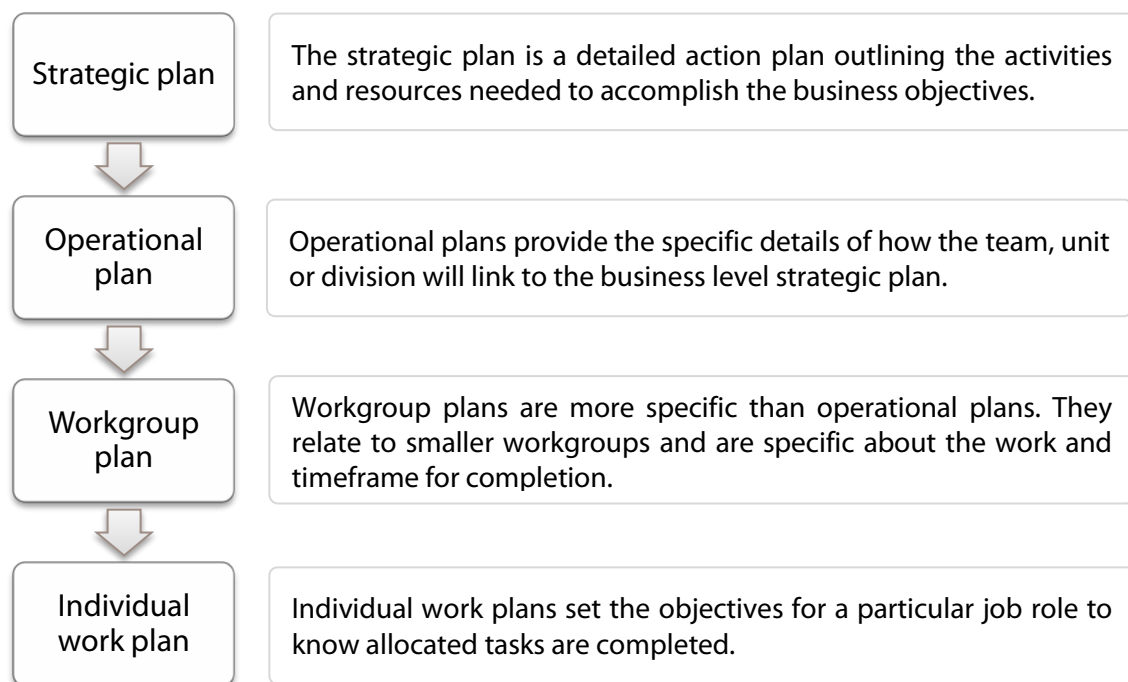
The team's goals and objectives should be aligned to the company's strategic plan. The strategic plan describes how the organisation is going to achieve its long-term goals, taking a holistic view of the organisation, including all departments, in its planning. The strategic plan usually includes a number of important elements such as the vision statement, the mission statement, strategic objectives and strategic action plans.

It's important for you as a team leader, to identify what the organisation is trying to achieve, during any consultation process. This enables the team to see how the work activities align to the achievement of those goals.

## Organisational requirements

Any work goals and objectives need to be negotiated and agreed in accordance with organisational requirements.

One key aspect is that they match the strategic and operational plans, as they are an integral part of the work schedule development. The integration of each of these plans can be seen in the diagram below.



*Figure 1 - The business planning process*

Other organisational requirements include:

- Quality and continuous improvement processes and standards
- Quality assurance and/or procedure manuals
- OHS policies, procedures and programs
- Legal and organisational policies, guidelines and requirements



### Activity 1-1: Team goals

1. Locate your organisation's strategic plan and determine how it aligns to the goals and objectives for your team
2. Examine your team's goals and assess them according to SMART

## Encouraging participation

The level of participation by which all team members contribute and cooperate, in the planning, decision making and operational aspects of the work team, will affect the dynamics of the team.

Teams with full participation tend to be united and willing to help each other. This is demonstrated when people make an extra effort to assist other team members to achieve dead-lines with task-completion

When people feel "left out" of the group, their rate of participation can progressively decline and they may become negative and unsupportive. This can be demonstrated by negative body-language and speech as well as an unwillingness to offer opinions or assist other team members.

The first step in encouraging team members to have input in decision-making processes requires a participative form of leadership.

A participative leader:

- ☒ Is easily approached
- ☒ Is concerned about team morale
- ☒ Keeps members informed
- ☒ Acts as a facilitator
- ☒ Consults
- ☒ Supports people when they make mistakes
- ☒ Gives positive feedback for good performance
- ☒ Copes with change
- ☒ Resolves conflict

This leadership approach works because it encourages shared ownership of decision making and gives people an opportunity to have input.



This increases the commitment of team members to the decision and helps them to accept change. However, participation only increases commitment if the individual considers participation worthwhile and legitimate. .

Participation in consultation can be achieved by:

- Encouraging input into decision making      By considering the following techniques, supervisors can encourage team members to become more involved in the decision making process.
- Offering choices      Ask the team members for suggestions and volunteers of who would like to manage different tasks; rather than just issuing instructions.
- Asking for ideas      Ask the team members for their solution to how several jobs can be completed within a set time frame; rather than pre-determine the process and telling the staff your final plan.
- Encouraging sharing      Ask team members who could work together to assist with the completion of work

Any problems or decisions should be presented to the team for discussion and input of ideas. Views and suggestions should be evaluated to determine the most appropriate course of action.

Consultation with team members can be conducted through any tool or device which ensures that all team members have the opportunity to contribute to team and individual effectiveness.



### Activity 1-2: Participation

1. How do you rate yourself against the criteria of a participative leader?
2. What actions do you currently undertake to encourage team members' participation in planning, decision making and operational aspects of the work team? What improvements could be made?
3. Think about how decisions are made in your team. Are the decision-making strategies the most appropriate for the type of decision to be made?



## Relevant legislation

In the development of work tasks and objectives you should consider the key provisions of relevant legislation, from all levels of government that may affect aspects of business operation. This can include:

- Occupational Health & Safety      Legislation that places obligations on employers, employees and others to ensure the workplace is safe.
- Racial discrimination              Legislation that prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, or immigration.
- Disability discrimination          Legislation that prohibits discrimination based on mental or physical impairment (including disease).
- Sexual discrimination              Legislation that prohibits sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender, marital status or pregnancy.
- Privacy laws                          Legislation related to the use, disclosure and storage of personal information
- Equal opportunity                  EEO involves not discriminating against people based on race, sex, age and cultural and religious beliefs.
- Fair Work legislation              The new workplace relations system in Australia that includes the 10 minimum standards of employment.



For links to the various legislations see  
<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

## Job roles and responsibilities

All team members need to be clear about their job role in the organisation and the areas/tasks for which they are responsible. Even junior staff members can be given some responsibility for particular tasks.

When considering the job roles and responsibilities and the tasks to be completed it is important to:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify specific aspects/requirements of each task</li> </ul>                    | <p>It can be quite surprising to really think through everything that is involved in completing a task properly. Sometimes people realise that they have unrealistic goals when they do this.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine time-frames for task completion</li> </ul>                              | <p>The time allocated for each task needs to be considered so there is no staff member who is over-burdened with lengthy or numerous tasks while another team member has time to spare.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine who is the most appropriate staff member to fulfil each task</li> </ul> | <p>Allocation should be to a team member who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Has the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the task</li> <li>b. Has the time to undertake the task</li> </ol>                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign priorities</li> </ul>  | <p>Tasks need to be prioritised in order of urgency depending on the business's needs.</p> <p>For example, deadlines from Head Office or a safety issue could mean that some tasks are given immediate priority over others.</p>                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequence the tasks</li> </ul>   | <p>The sequencing needs to be considered so that as many team members as possible can be actively engaged in the completion of the tasks.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set and agree on your expectations with the staff members concerned</li> </ul>    | <p>If staff are going to feel part of the team, they need to be part of the process. If it is not possible to have them participate in all of the task allocation steps progressively, then it is important to get their agreement to the tasks at this time.</p> |

## Encouraging responsibility

Once tasks have been allocated, make sure the person is clear about their responsibilities and accountabilities associated with it. You need to create an environment where people accept responsibility for their actions and are prepared to admit mistakes.

In addition, team members need to understand where their role fits within the organisation. They can do this by identifying where their role is on the store's organisational chart.

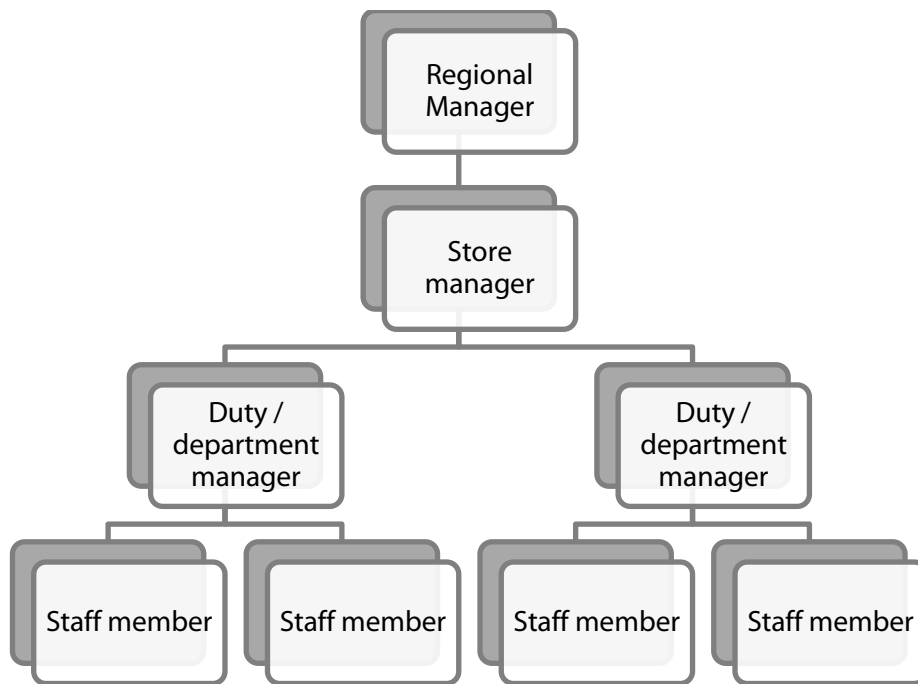


Figure 2 - Organisational chart for a retail chain

All team members need to know and use the organisation's structure of authority. This includes:

- Knowing their own level of authority
- Knowing who to refer to when they do not have the authority to make a decision
- Understanding the roles of other people in the organisation and communicating with them appropriately
- Using the structure of authority within the business so appropriate opinions are sought and referrals of problems are made promptly

## Resolving problems

Making decisions and generating solutions to problems, within a group or team, can be challenging. There are occasions when problems or conflicts arise. Team members may argue over details or be overly critical with one another. However, teams that function well can outperform individuals in decision making and solution generation. The following techniques can help you to encourage individuals and teams to inspire one another and create innovative decisions and techniques for overcoming problems.

### Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a group creativity technique designed to generate a large number of ideas for the solution of a problem.

A brainstorming session requires a facilitator, a brainstorming space and something on which to write ideas, such as a white-board, a flip chart or software tool. The facilitator's responsibilities include guiding the session, encouraging participation and writing ideas down.

Brainstorming works best with a varied group of people. Participants should come from various departments across the organisation and have different backgrounds. Even in specialist areas, outsiders can bring fresh ideas that can inspire the experts.

There are four basic rules in brainstorming. These are intended to reduce social inhibitions among members, stimulate idea generation, and increase overall creativity of the team.

- Focus on quantity

This rule is aiming to facilitate problem solving through the maxim, "quantity breeds quality". The assumption is that the greater the number of ideas generated, the greater the chance of producing an effective solution.
- Withhold criticism

In brainstorming, criticism of ideas generated should be put 'on hold'. Instead, participants should focus on extending or adding to ideas, reserving criticism for a later 'critical stage' of the process. By suspending judgment, participants will feel free to generate unusual ideas.
- Welcome unusual ideas

To get a useful list of ideas, unusual ideas are welcomed. They can be generated by looking from new perspectives and suspending assumptions. These new ways of thinking may provide better solutions.
- Combine and improve ideas

Good ideas may be combined to form a single better good idea. It is believed to stimulate the building of ideas by a process of association.

## Team meetings

Team meetings are an important way to develop the team, get them working together, and to keep communication open and flowing.

There is a range of meeting types that are appropriate for different purposes. As the team leader you must initially decide if a meeting is appropriate, and then decide what sort of meeting to have. The common meeting types are:

### 1. Information giving meetings



These meetings are generally focussed on one-way communication.

They are appropriate when important information must be given to team members. These meetings do not include much time for feedback, questions or discussion. The information is non-negotiable and discussion will not improve the situation.

For example: A meeting to explain a new company policy or detail a change in the business's focus.

This information can also be provided through written communication, since there is no/little planned interaction with the team member.

### 2. Information exchange meetings



These meetings are devised to explain and also to discuss information. Time is allocated for team member's opinions and ideas, and time for the team to interact with each other.

For example: A staff meeting where agenda items are explained and then discussed.

If there are no resolutions or decision made, then the meeting can become a "talk-fest" with no achievable results for the time dedicated to the meeting.

### 3. Problem solving and decision making



These meetings include characteristics of the types already discussed, but include decision making and/or problem solving interaction. This allows the manager to gain the best ideas and advice from the team and use it to better run the business.

If there are no clear decisions made with identified people about tasks and deadlines, then the meeting may never achieve anything definite, after it has been finished.

## Dealing with conflict

In any workplace, people may be involved in conflict situations where they are either:

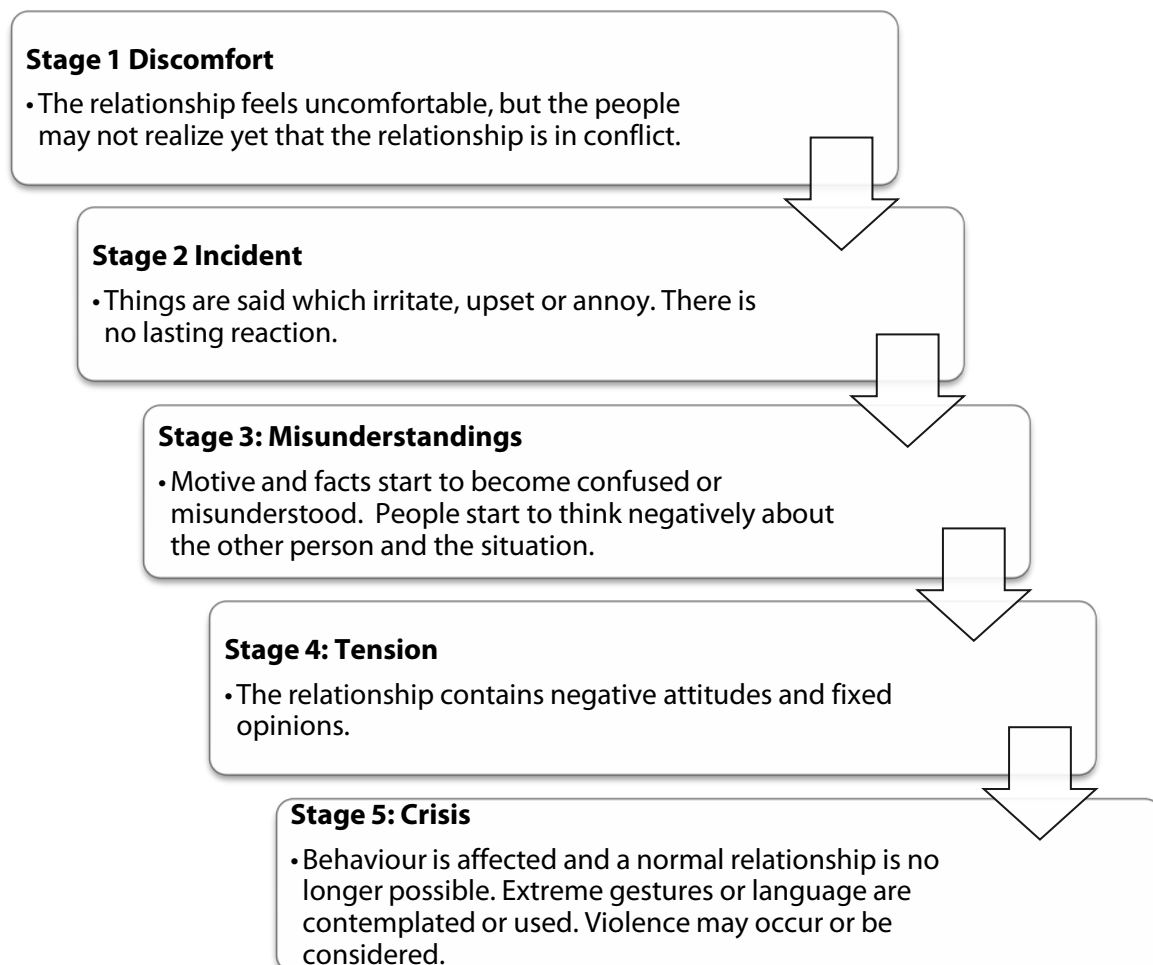
- One of the conflicting parties
- A third party to the conflict

Team leaders are expected to manage conflict situations in their workplace, or to refer them to the appropriate level of authority. It is more important to resolve the situation than to assign blame. Resolving conflict can lead to even stronger and more open working relationships than existed before the conflict arose.

### Levels of conflict

When identifying a conflict or problem situation, it is useful to understand the levels that are involved when a conflict begins to occur. This allows you to identify situations before they become too serious and much harder to manage.

According to the Conflict Resolution Network (2009), there are five stages in a conflict which can be identified.



Conflict is easier to manage and resolve if it is identified at earlier stages, rather than if it is left where it can become a major issue to manage.

## Resolution techniques

The team leader needs to use excellent communication and problem solving skills to resolve conflict situations. There are different steps involved, depending on whether you are personally a part of the conflict.

### When a third party to the conflict

Consider the following strategies:

- Gather quality information about the background and stages of the conflict  
This involves:
  - Respecting both parties in the conflict
  - Treat the conflict and the subject matter seriously
  - Asking probing questions
  - Using listening skills
  - Look for common ground on which to base a solution
  - Identify the facts as apposed to emotions
- Solve the problem  
This involves:
  - Summarising the problem
  - Searching for and evaluating any possible solutions
  - Accessing the abilities of a relevant other party if necessary
- Decide on and implement the solution  
This involves:
  - Explaining the solution to the parties involved
  - Gaining commitment for the solution
  - Implementing the solution
- Follow up and monitoring  
This involves:
  - Ensuring that the solution to the conflict is a lasting one and that the conflict does not reappear later on
  - Documenting the details when that is necessary to meet company requirements



## When one of the conflicting parties

Consider using the following points as prompts to discuss the problem:

- Address the problem promptly while the relationship is still viable
- Use open and positive body language
- Respect the other party
- Explain your own point of view
- Ask the other person for their opinion
- Look for a resolution.

Encourage staff to use professional language when they are expressing negatives.

Such as: *"When you ..... it makes me feel ..... because ....."*

For example:

*"When you do not come back from lunch on time, it makes me feel angry because I am hungry and tired by then and deserve to have my break too."*

## Resolution suggestions

During the resolution of the conflict consider the following:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow people to express their feelings</li> </ul>           | <p>Staff may need to express their anger, hurt or frustration before they can move on. This needs to be controlled, so a feeding-frenzy of negativity is avoided.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge their feelings</li> </ul>                       | <p>By recognising their feelings and problems, the team leader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shows empathy and understanding</li> <li>○ Helps the staff members to move forward towards a solution</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for suggestions and solutions to the problem</li> </ul> | <p>Staff members often feel more satisfied with a solution if they have had the chance to help solve the problem – even if the solution is not what they wanted.</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the facts</li> </ul>                               | <p>Assist the staff to focus on the facts of the situation. This moves them past the emotions and negativity and moves towards a solution.</p> <p>Ask open and probing questions: What? Why? When? How? Which?</p>            |

Summarise and paraphrase facts to clarify them.

For example:

*"Mary, why are you often back late, so Jim can't start his lunch break?"*

*"Do you mean that you never get to start your break on time either, because the earlier staff are also coming back late?"*

*"So we have a situation where all of the lunch breaks are running late, because of a problem that is occurring earlier in the day."*

- Referral to a higher level of authority

Some problems/issues cannot be resolved at the team level and require the manager to pass on the detail to someone else. In these situations, the staff members need to be informed of the process and the progress of the situation.

The team leader needs to be clear that the problem has been sent to the appropriate person in the organisation. Communication needs to be professional with complete, unbiased content.



### Activity 1-3: Conflict resolution

1. Look at your workplace and list the areas where your team might have conflict. List some strategies you could use to prevent the conflict starting in the first place.
2. Think about a conflict currently facing your team. Write down the steps you would need to take to start resolving the conflict.



## Key Points

- A consultative approach works in gaining team members' input on decisions made within the team
- The level of participation by which all team members contribute and cooperate will affect the dynamics of the team
- Encouraging team members to have input in decision-making processes requires a participative form of leadership
- All team members need to be clear about their job role and the areas/tasks for which they are responsible
- Problems and conflict within the team need to be addressed

## Chapter 2. Participate in work team



### Learning objectives

On completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- 2.1 Actively encourage and support team members to participate in team activities and communication processes and to take responsibility for their actions
- 2.2 Encourage team members to take responsibility for their own work and to assist each other in undertaking required roles and responsibilities
- 2.3 Utilise own contribution to work team to serve as a role model for others and enhance the organisation's image within the work team, the organisation and with clients and customers

### Introduction

It's important to encourage your team members to participate in and take responsibility for team activities and communication processes.

The benefits of their participation will be:

- Better understanding of what needs to be done
- Involvement
- Team cohesion
- Commitment to the task

A team is only able to achieve this if their team leader can competently facilitate team processes so that members accept responsibility for tasks and communication.

To competently facilitate these processes you need to have a general understanding of the principles and techniques of:

- Group dynamics
- Motivation

As the team leader, you also need to serve as a role model, displaying the actions and attitudes required of the team.

## Team dynamics

How team members relate to each other and to you as the team leader has a big impact on the effectiveness of the team's operation.

Behaviour can influence not only performance, but also the degree of satisfaction that members get from working in the team.

Studies have shown that team members take up a number of roles in the team — some have a positive influence and others have a negative influence.

There are two types of team roles:

- **Maintenance role**      This is concerned with exploring, searching, creating and contacting
- **Task role**                This is concerned with detail, precision, standards, rules and planning

The table below summarises some of the different types of roles members may undertake in a team.

| <b>Task roles</b>    | <b>Maintenance roles</b> | <b>Destructive roles</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Brainstormer         | Encourager               | Husher                   |
| Expert               | Peacemaker               | Recognition seeker       |
| Judge                | Tension-reliever         | Victim                   |
| Devil's advocate     | Confronter               | Blocker                  |
| Representative       |                          | Distractor               |
| Implementer          |                          | Aggressor                |
| Chairperson          |                          |                          |
| Secretary/Note taker |                          |                          |

If you have an imbalance of roles within your team, then you have a problem. Too many members taking up task roles will result in the work getting done, but at the cost of interpersonal relations. And if there are too many members taking up maintenance roles, then the members will feel good about being in the team but often at the expense of the task.



### Activity 2-1: Team dynamics

1. Think about the different people you work with. Do they offer different things to your team? List the different ways that they contribute.
2. What would you do if you had an imbalance of roles in your team but you could not change the team membership in any way?

## Motivating the team

Motivation is one of the key ingredients for success in any organisation. You can have all the technical skills in the world; however, if you can't motivate your team, you will not achieve success. As a leader, a majority of your job is to motivate others to succeed so that everyone's goals are accomplished.

Following are some tips for motivating the team:

- Involve them

Many employees want to be involved in the ongoing development and progress of their company. Plus, they often have insightful ideas that can make a significant difference in the company.
- Communicate

Employees want regular updates on the progress of the business and their personal performance. Use memos, email, telephone, and one-on-one and group meetings to keep your team informed of changes, updates, new products, etc.
- Celebrate individual and team performance

Focus on recognising excellent performance and provide positive reinforcement.
- Set challenging goals

People strive to achieve what is expected of them. If you set challenging goals your team will work hard to accomplish them, providing of course, they are realistically attainable.
- Give them the tools to succeed

No team will stay motivated if they do not have the necessary tools required to do their job. This includes equipment, internal support, inventory, marketing materials, training, etc.
- Manage poor performance

Your team expects you to manage individuals who do not perform to standard. Ignoring these situations affects profitability, causes higher turnover and generates low morale.

*(Robertson, 2004)*

## Encouraging responsibility

In addition to the motivation factors described above, to develop a cohesive team you need to encourage and support:

- **Cooperation**

This is the very essence of teamwork. It means fitting in with others and supporting them. It is important that you provide the right conditions to foster cooperation within your team.

You need to encourage team members to help one another achieve their goals. If someone has too much work they may need help from other team members who are not so busy.
- **Communication**

Team members need to use positive two-way communication. You need to ensure communication channels are open, not only between yourself and the team but also between team members.
- **Trust**

Trust lies at the heart of collaborative work methods. Trust is a difficult issue to address directly. It develops over time as a result of positive experiences and through deepening the level of understanding between team members.
- **Acceptance of diversity**

As workplaces become more diverse, strategies for dealing with different age groups, sexes, cultures and abilities have become increasingly important.

As a team leader, you will often need to manage a team with diverse team members. It's your job to acknowledge the value of differences and the benefits that can follow from them by sharing ideas and experiences.

It is important that you send a clear message to team members that harassment or bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- **Positive environment**

Trust and friendliness in a team provide a positive environment in which to work. It usually signals a team that is happy to be together.

Some team members may not be performing these tasks at the required level and require some coaching and/or mentoring.

## Coaching and mentoring

Through coaching and/or mentoring, support is provided to the team to ensure:

- Team members have the appropriate knowledge and skills to achieve the team objectives
- Team members have an opportunity to develop a positive attitude and are willing to cope with the required tasks
- The continuation of communication regarding the team's performance and objectives



### Coaching vs. Mentoring

Coaching is the development of specific skills and knowledge that employees require to effectively perform tasks at work.

Mentoring is the guidance and development of an individual to enhance their professional and personal development.

Coaching is one of the tools mentors may use to provide learning and development opportunities.

Coaching typically addresses a short term need, while mentoring is a longer-term relationship, often 'for life'. (Clutterbuck, 2004)

Coaching to create an environment of teamwork and to develop team members' skills can be achieved by:

- Watching what's happening with the team and finding out what they need
- Clarifying direction, goals and accountability - to encourage accountability involve the person or team in the decision making process
- Dealing with emotional obstacles by helping the team through change
- Giving feedback by pointing and hinting towards solutions, allowing for team members to discover their own solutions
- Demonstrating the desired behaviours

Coaching is more than telling people how to do something. It involves giving advice, skill building, creating challenges, removing performance barriers, building better processes and learning through discovery.



## **Leading by example**

A component of leading the team is to utilise your own contribution to the work team to serve as a role model for others.

When leading by example you need to:

- Display the level of performance that you require of the team
- Not avoid or ignore difficult situations or problems
- Using appropriate communication skills



## Key Points

- It's important to encourage team members to participate in and take responsibility for team activities and communication processes.
- How team members relate to each other and to you as the team leader has a big impact on the effectiveness of the team's operation.
- Motivation is one of the key ingredients for success in any organisation
- A component of leading the team is to utilise your own contribution to the work team to serve as a role model for others

## Chapter 3. Communication skills



### Learning objectives

On completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- 4.1 Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward team members' efforts and contributions
- 4.2 Maintain open communication with line manager/management at all times
- 4.3 Communicate information from line manager/management to the team
- 4.4 Communicate unresolved issues to line manager/management and follow-up to ensure action is taken in response to these matters

## Introduction

As a team leader, you play a key role in keeping your team, management and any other relevant stakeholders informed. It is your job to ensure that the lines of communication are kept open and that the relevant information reaches the appropriate people within the required timeframes.

You're also responsible for creating a positive team culture and fostering open communication within your team. People also need to feel comfortable talking to you about problems or issues that concern them without fearing any negative consequences.

To achieve these responsibilities you need to ensure that you have effective communication skills to:

- Make sure team members understand the team's objectives
- Communicating so that members of your team can carry out their tasks effectively
- Making sure that your team understands the organisation's overall procedures and regulations, as well as any particular procedures your department or section may have
- Provide feedback to team members
- Explaining the organisation's changing requirements to your team
- Communicating the needs of your team to senior management
- Communicating the needs of senior management to your team

## Communication channels

To be effective, communication has to be relevant, timely and appropriate. You need to be aware of, and use, the right channels for communicating information. All organisations have formal and informal channels for communication.

| Formal   | Informal  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are aligned to the work processes in the organisation, departments and people communicate up or down the chain, or sideways to people in other parts of the organisation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are the networks that people set up in the workplace, for example, calling another team leader to discuss options before a committee meets to make a decision</li> </ul> |

Information can be exchanged between key stakeholders in two possible ways:

### Vertical Communication

This is communication to and from personnel who are above and below your position on the organisational structure.

Vertical communication is an important type of communication as it includes:

- Obtaining the required permission or advice from higher levels of management and notifying them of the progress of the plan
- Communicating to team members about their responsibilities
- Communicating unresolved issues, concerns and problems related raised by management to the team and vice versa

### Horizontal Communication

This is communication that is to and from other personnel at the same organisational authority level as yourself. This may include cooperation between other managers within the same store or in other stores.



## Communication methods

When communicating or sending information to your team or management, you need to make a decision about the communication channel and method that will be used.

Here are some useful questions to ask before you send the information:

- Who am I sending this information to?
- How many people need to receive the message?
- What is the purpose of the communication?
- Will it need to be informal or formal?
- How much information needs to be conveyed?
- Is there a need for feedback?
- Does it need to be confidential?
- How quickly is the information required?
- What are the costs involved in sending the information?

The following table is a summary of common communication methods and their advantages and disadvantages.

| Method of Communication    | Advantages   | Disadvantages   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Face-to-face conversations | Non-verbal communication<br>Feedback can be instant<br>Misunderstandings can be clarified immediately      | Not always possible<br>Can be expensive to get people from different locations together   |
| Telephone call             | Quick<br>Cheap<br>Feedback can be gained immediately   | No non-verbal communication<br>Easy to be distracted when on the phone<br>Person may take the call when they are not in a position to talk          |
| Meetings                   | Many people receive the message at the same time<br>Opportunity for feedback<br>Opportunity for discussion | Some people may dominate discussions<br>Agendas or meeting objectives may not be clear<br>Expensive to get people from different locations together |
| Letters                    | Have written record of the communication<br>Can be confidential  | Slow, not good for urgent issues<br>Feedback is not instant<br>Requires sound writing skills  |

| Method of Communication                     | Advantages   | Disadvantages   |
|---|--|---|
| Reports and submissions                     | <p>Excellent for reporting findings or making recommendations that require action</p> <p>Can deal with complex information</p> <p>Written record of what is being communicated</p> <p>More formal documents useful for legal purposes</p>              | <p>Time consuming to read</p> <p>Feedback is limited</p> <p>Often slow to produce</p> <p>Difficult to change</p> <p>Can be restricted to only certain people and not everyone who needs the information will necessarily get it</p>   |
| Diagrams, graphs or pictorial presentations | <p>Useful for showing complex information</p> <p>Can overcome language barriers</p> <p>Useful for OHS signs etc</p>  | <p>Can be poorly labelled</p> <p>No feedback is received</p> <p>Can be misunderstood</p>  |
| Presentations                               | <p>Useful for training</p> <p>Allow participation and feedback</p> <p>Send the same consistent message at the same time</p>  | <p>Can be boring if not prepared well</p> <p>Not always sufficient time to answer all questions</p> <p>Requires specific equipment</p>  |
| Email                                       | <p>Instant</p> <p>Can make contact with people that you might not be able to access on the phone or face-to-face</p> <p>Can send the same message to a number of people in lots of locations</p> <p>Feedback can be instant</p> <p>Confidentiality</p> | <p>Information overload, people delete information without reading</p> <p>'Email rage' can occur where people are aggressive and hostile because they can avoid face-to-face confrontation</p> <p>Reduces politeness and respect</p> <p>Requires skills and appropriate technology</p> <p>Files can be deleted</p> <p>Inappropriate material can be sent by email</p> |
| Faxes                                       | <p>Instant</p> <p>Complex information can be sent</p> <p>Diagrams and pictures can be sent</p>   | <p>Feedback can be slow and limited</p> <p>Lacks confidentiality</p> <p>Requires technology</p>   |
| Mobile phone                                | <p>Instant</p> <p>Good for keeping track of staff</p> <p>Can communicate with people who are away from the office</p> <p>Feedback is instant</p>   | <p>Can be overused</p> <p>Can be used at inappropriate times</p> <p>Costly</p>  |

Table 1 - Pros and cons of communication methods

## Providing feedback

Team leaders need to include meaningful feedback in their decision making with team members. This can be feedback to:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise and reward team members efforts</li> </ul> | <p>This will assist in motivating the team.</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value their contributions</li> </ul>                 | <p>Feedback is required to encourage participation in planning and decision making.</p> <p>This is especially important if a team member's suggestion is not going to be used.</p> <p>For example: Jill has suggested that she could complete a stock-taking task in the stock reserve.</p> <p><i>"Thanks for that idea Jill, but I think we need you to keep the front-of-house operating, because you are the only trained register operator rostered this morning. Can we try and get you to complete a stock-take another time?"</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage further development</li> </ul>             | <p>This is required where a team members performance is below the required level and development of skills and knowledge is required.</p>  |

Some tips to giving effective feedback include:

- Using good eye contact and open body language
- Summarise regularly so that you are both clear about what you have agreed and how you will progress with the area requiring development
- Allow sufficient time to give effective feedback, make sure the feedback is not rushed
- Encourage the individual to talk and come up with options and ideas to move forward
- Ensure feedback is given frequently
- Avoid general statements and clarify phrases such as "it", "they", "then" with more specific information
- Ensure the feedback is given as soon as possible after the event

## Communication barriers

Communication is a two-way process. As well as choosing the correct channel to send the message, you must also be aware of some of the main barriers to communication.

Despite the best intentions, there are lots of barriers that can prevent you communicating effectively. These barriers can be psychological, social and structural and each can distort and obscure your intended message.

If any part of the communication process is distorted or broken, you and the person you communicate with will not have a common understanding of the message.

Some tips to remove the barriers to successful communication include:

- **Language**

Choose your words carefully. Some words are emotive, some are neutral, some are vague and many have several meanings.

Use 'plain English'. Long, complicated sentences and unfamiliar words or jargon confuses people. Make sure your messages are clear, concise, concrete, complete and correct. Avoid negative or emotive words or commands. These can make team members resentful and uncooperative.
- **Perceptions, prejudice and stereotyping**

People often hear what they expect to hear and see what they expect to see. People sometimes stereotype others in a negative way and this may have serious results for an organisation when it comes to anti-discrimination. Your own perceptions affect your communication and you need to be aware of them so they don't influence the way you communicate with others.
- **Empathy**

Before making a judgment about someone, try to see how it is for the other person by listening to their side of the story. Having empathy can help you to understand your team members' motivations and perspectives and so improve your communication with them.
- **Status**

A person's position in the organisation can be a barrier to communication. You should be aware of how your status or the status of others may restrict or affect the communication.
- **Message complexity**

If the information that you need to send is very complex or there is a lot of it, this can sometimes be a barrier for the people who receive it (that is, they may not read or understand it).



- **Location**

Noise, interruptions and distractions can get in the way of clear and complete communication. They may take your attention away from the message and make communication difficult.

Talk somewhere that will encourage open communication. Make sure it is free from distractions and other environmental noise
- **Timing**

When people rush their communication may be unclear. Poor timing can also cause communication to fail when people are preoccupied with other urgent matters and not listening effectively.
- **Poor listening skills**

Many people are not good listeners and this can hinder effective communication
- **Inadequate background knowledge**

Often when people communicate, they assume you know exactly what they are communicating about, but it is possible that others may have very little background knowledge about the issue or topic.
- **Lack of feedback**

If communication is to be successful, it is important to know that the message has been received and understood. You should also ensure that the person who received the message has an opportunity to ask questions and get clarification, if necessary. Put processes in place so that feedback can be gathered and assessed. Lack of feedback causes a break in the communication cycle and without it, breakdown in communications is inevitable.



### Activity 3-1: Communication

1. What communication channels do you use when communicating with management, your team or other departments?
2. List the major methods of communication that you use when working with your team and communicating with management. Do you think they are effective for the purpose of the communication?
3. What communication barriers you have faced at work? How could you overcome them?



## Key Points

- The lines of communication are required to be kept open and that the relevant information reaches the appropriate people within the required timeframes
- To be effective, communication has to be relevant, timely and appropriate
- When communicating or sending information to your team or management, you need to make a decision about the communication channel and method that will be used
- Despite the best intentions, there are lots of barriers that can

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## Appendices

Below is a list of Appendices for this unit:

- Appendix A: Skills Text evaluation form

## Appendix A: Skills Text Evaluation Form

|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Learner (optional):</b>  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>Trainer:</b>   | / /10                 |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>Instructions</b>   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <i>The purpose of this evaluation is to gain feedback from you on the delivery and content of the Skills Text. Thank you for your participation. For each question, tick the response which best approximates your opinion.</i> |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
| <b>1. Skills text resource</b>  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Outcomes of learning clearly outlined   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Learning materials well organised   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Activities helped me to learn   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Activities and discussions appropriate  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Content relevant to current work practices  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>2. Overall</b>   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>I felt supported in my learning and assessment by First Impressions Resources</b>  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>Resources informative and relevant</b>   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>3. Other</b>   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Trainer approachable and gave timely feedback   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| <b>Other Comments:</b>  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
| Make any suggestions you feel would improve the resources and any other comments you feel may be relevant.  |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |
|   |                       |              |                 |                          |            |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK





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