Versions

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<td>Pilot 1</td>
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<td>July 2017</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>August 2017</td>
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<td>November 2017</td>
<td>Brand refresh</td>
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<td>January 2018</td>
<td>Revised version (updated activities and resources)</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
<td>Revised Leader/Manager Styles</td>
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Acknowledgments

Produced by: Health Education and Training Institute (HETI)

The Health Education and Training Institute takes this opportunity to acknowledge the strong collaboration with Local Health Districts, Specialty Networks, the NSW Ministry of Health, NSW Health Pillars and other public health organisations.

The Health Education and Training Institute greatly values the partnerships and expertise without which the successful development of this resource would not have been possible.

Course information and feedback

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND
The Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) supports education and training for excellent health care across the NSW Health system. The Health Education and Training Institute works to ensure that world-class education and training resources are available to support the full range of roles across the public health system including patient care, administration and support services.

The Health Education and Training Institute’s educational philosophy is to maximise the capabilities of the health workforce by providing education and training based on the best available evidence from research and practice. The tenets of our philosophy are:

- Connection between theory and practice
- Learner centred approaches
- Commitment to lifelong learning
- Innovation

ABOUT THIS COURSE
The ‘Emotional Intelligence in Practice’ course is part of the Management Solutions Series. It is an eight-hour course which provides participants with the opportunity to develop their understanding of emotional intelligence and how improving their emotional intelligence can positively influence their management roles. This course will enable participants to reflect upon their current capabilities and learn skills to develop their ability to: identify emotions accurately in themselves and others; think about and communicate emotions effectively in the workplace; understand the complexity and causes of emotions; and manage emotions in the workplace.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
At the completion of this workshop participants will be able to:

- Define emotional intelligence and its application to management in NSW Health
- Articulate the importance of emotional intelligence in managing, building and maintaining effective teams
- Apply emotional intelligence and growth mindset approaches to analyse and improve team communication and performance
- Moderate own emotions with an active awareness
- Apply emotional intelligence principles to deliver effective feedback

YOUR ROLES AS A PARTICIPANT
It is expected that all participants will display the NSW Health CORE values:

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Respect
- Empowerment

You will be expected to:

- Contribute positively to the group as a whole
- Ensure recognition and inclusion of all group members
- Participate in activities
- Make constructive suggestions
- Share personal experiences with the group and be mindful of the confidentiality of others
- Be open and respect different views
- Contribute to decision-making
- Ask questions
- Take responsibility for your own learning.
USE OF THIS MANUAL

This manual is for your use during the course and can also be used for reference following the course. Pages have been provided for you to make notes alongside key learning points and to write down questions you may want to ask the course facilitator.

Note that various icons are used throughout the manual. The meanings are as follows:

- Activity
- Reflective Activity
- Facilitator Led Activity
## SECTION 2: COURSE CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 am</td>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong>: Introductions and expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 am</td>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong>: The case for emotional intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30 am</td>
<td><strong>Session 3</strong>: Growth mindsets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.10 am</td>
<td><strong>Morning tea</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.25 am</td>
<td><strong>Session 4</strong>: Leader/Manager profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 5</strong>: Recognising and perceiving emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00 pm</td>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 6</strong>: Thinking about and communicating emotions in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 7</strong>: Understanding emotions in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00 pm</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon break</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 8</strong>: Managing emotions at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
<td><strong>Session 9</strong>: Action planning and wrap up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 pm</td>
<td><strong>Close</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SESSION 1: INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS
Welcome to the Management Solutions Series: Emotional Intelligence in Practice course.

Activity 1 – Introductions

Take a few moments to introduce yourself to and get to know a fellow participant. Each of you are to pick and write below 3 words that describe your emotions at work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sometimes at work I feel...</th>
<th>Most often at work I feel...</th>
<th>At work I never feel...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
SESSION 2: THE CASE FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is defined as the “ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and [the] ability to use this awareness to manage your behaviour and relationships... It affects how we manage behaviours, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions that achieve positive results”.

(Emotional Intelligence 2.0., Bradberry, Greaves, p.17)

How CORE values link to emotional intelligence

Collaboration - working well together requires us to be able to read others and respond appropriately.

Openness – if we truly want a transparent learning and working environment, where we are open to feedback and improvement, we will need to be able to manage our emotions and implement self-reflection.

Respect – treating people with respect and dignity is a core emotional intelligence skill, but respect looks different to different people – so again, our ability to ‘read’ a situation is crucial.

Empowerment – for managers, being able to recognise when to empower and inspire staff, when to lead them, and when to provide safety through direction and containment are crucial emotional intelligence skills.

Some of the benefits of improving emotional intelligence according to research include:

- Improved patient interactions and overall patient care
- Improved communication
- Reduced risk of clinical error and increases effectiveness of patient care
- Improved individual and team performance outcomes
- Increased staff engagement
- Increased accuracy and speed in decision making
- Positive impacts on: decision making, turnover, prosocial behaviours, negotiation, conflict resolution, group dynamics and leadership in teams.

(Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Chernis, 2003; Boyatzis, 1982; Boyatzis, 1999)
### Activity 1 – Experiences of emotional intelligence in management styles

#### Part 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admired characteristics:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Think about one or two managers you have worked with that have inspired you or brought out the best in you.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenging characteristics:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Imagine, or think of, a manager who you have found challenging to work effectively with.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 2

Now rate these individuals (without naming – maybe initials or a symbol) in relation to:

**Self-Awareness** - Understanding of own strengths and weaknesses, self-insight.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Social Awareness** - Empathy, ability to ‘read’ an environment in an organisation.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Self-Management** - Emotional regulation, self-control, adaptability.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Social Skills** - Influence, ability to influence, lead and develop others.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What do you notice?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
From these observations, what do you want to improve on, or become more aware of, in your own management style?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
SESSION 3: GROWTH MINDSETS

“Are good leaders made or born?”

A brief overview of Carol Dweck’s mindset (Dweck, 2012)

1) The growth mindset: Carol Dweck proposes that most successful people in any area of life believe that they and others can learn, grow, develop and change substantially. From this belief, they act in ways that support themselves and others to succeed. Willingness to receive feedback is essential for the growth mindset.

2) The fixed mindset: When people believe that they or others cannot change, they limit the actions that they take to support successful outcomes. Successes from this mindset are often only short term.

3) Most people use a combination of growth and fixed mindsets, often in different contexts. For example, growth at work but fixed at home; growth with one person but fixed with another; growth for one type of skills but fixed for another. The more contexts that an individual applies a growth mindset to, the more successful they become in all areas.

4) These ideas directly relate to the physical makeup of the brain in humans and animals. Neuroscience is proving that we can adapt, learn and change. The human brain is plastic, or changeable. We have preferred neural pathways which have been shaped by doing things the same way repeatedly. These pathways are stronger because of their regular use, yet research shows that these pathways can be re-wired and new habits, or neural pathways, can become stronger through regular effort and practice.

Key concepts of a growth mindset:

- This is about the underlying beliefs we have about learning and intelligence.
- When people believe that they have the capacity to improve, they understand that effort and practice makes them stronger.
- Therefore, they put in extra time and effort, and that leads to higher achievement.
Carol Dweck’s “Two Mindsets”

(Two mindsets, n.d.)
The ‘fixed’ mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a ‘fixed’ mindset</th>
<th>Repercussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My intelligence is a fixed trait – I have a certain amount and that’s that.</td>
<td>I worry about how much intelligence I have and it makes me interested in looking and feeling as if I have enough. I must look clever and, at all costs, not look stupid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel clever when things are easy, where I put in little effort and I outperform my peers.</td>
<td>Effort, difficulty, setbacks or higher performing peers call my intelligence into question, even if I have high confidence in my intelligence, so I feel stupid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need easy successes to feel clever.</td>
<td>Challenges are a threat to my self-esteem, so I won’t engage with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to have my inadequacies and errors revealed.</td>
<td>I will withdraw from valuable learning opportunities if I think this might happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even if I’m doing well initially, I won’t be able to cope with a problem or obstacle.</td>
<td>I readily disengage from tasks when obstacles occur.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ‘growth’ mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a ‘growth’ mindset</th>
<th>Repercussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence is something I can increase through my own efforts.</td>
<td>I am keen to work hard and learn as much as I can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I acknowledge that there are differences between people in how much they know and how quickly they master things.</td>
<td>I believe that everyone, with effort and guidance, can increase their intellectual abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love to learn new things.</td>
<td>I will readily sacrifice opportunities to look clever in favour of opportunities to learn something new.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am excited by challenge.</td>
<td>Even if I have low confidence in my intelligence, I throw myself into difficult tasks – and stick with them. I set myself goals and make sure I have strategies to reach them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel clever when…</td>
<td>I am fully engaged with a new task, exerting effort to master something, stretching my skills and putting my knowledge to good use (e.g. training new staff members).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(McKay, 2014)
**Common perceptions about emotions in the workplace**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence in the workplace means always asking people how</td>
<td>Emotion has little to do with achieving positive patient outcomes.</td>
<td>Emotion clouds good judgement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they &quot;feel&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion causes friction between teammates.</td>
<td>It is okay for women to show emotion in the workplace but not men.</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence is a new idea and older, experienced professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>don't need it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence is a 'soft skill' whose value can't be measured.</td>
<td>Emotion has little to do with our work.</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence is an excuse to indulge colleagues who are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;too sensitive&quot; at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only weak people get emotional. Really strong people would never get</td>
<td>Showing emotions is unprofessional.</td>
<td>Once we let ourselves feel our emotions, we won't be able to regain our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional.</td>
<td></td>
<td>composure. This would look bad to patients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing ourselves to become emotional means we have given up on trying</td>
<td>Other people cause our feelings. We have no control over how we feel.</td>
<td>Only certain emotions are appropriate to display in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to solve the problem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Activity – Developing growth mindsets in your team**

On the previous page there is a list of common perceptions about emotions in the workplace. Working in pairs or small groups select two or three of these perceptions that you believe is displayed in your team and/or workplace. The perception(s) you have selected can represent a ‘fixed mindset’ used by staff in your team or work environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chosen perception</th>
<th>Rewrite this perception into a statement that shows a ‘growth mindset’ perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example:</td>
<td>Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Showing emotions in the workplace is unprofessional.”</td>
<td>“Learning to display emotions appropriately in the workplace may help us to respond to patients with more empathy and understanding, improving their experience.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Reflection

Take a few minutes to consider:

In your team, where would you most like to apply a growth mindset approach, that you may not be fully doing so at the moment? What limiting beliefs do you need to challenge in your team to be able to do this? (e.g. “I can’t because…”)

How could you do this?
SESSION 4: THE LEADER/MANAGER STYLES™ AND EMOTIONALLY-DEPENDENT BEHAVIOURS

The Framework
In any situation where people are trying to bring about change there appear to be two main factors determining how it is most likely to be attempted.

1. There is the nature of the change-agent him/herself and the extent to which s/he is prepared to change.
2. There is the nature of the situation as s/he sees it. Does it require a complete change, or perhaps a more gradual modification of how things are done?

On the ‘map’, moving horizontally, the behaviour goes from a ‘task/thinking’ approach (Do it Better) to a ‘people/feeling’ approach (Engage your People). The three specific areas explored are:

- The extent to which you prefer to maintain control or share power
- Your tendency to make decisions based upon thoughts and knowledge or feelings and values
- Your level of focus on things or people.

On the ‘map’, moving vertically, the behaviour goes from a transactional ‘get the job done’ approach (Make it Happen) to a transformational ‘let’s change things’ approach (Drive the Future). The three specific areas explored are:

- The extent to which you are likely to consider approaches that already exist rather than new and untried approaches
- Your preference for incremental change compared to radical change
- Your tendency to use approaches that fit in with the prevailing culture or those which are unorthodox.

The combination of the two axes/dimensions, ‘left/right’ and ‘up/down’, give you an indication of your preferred style. Almost all roles require flexibility and a range of styles. It is therefore helpful to be aware of the roles where you probably feel more comfortable (usually ‘strengths’), and also consider the areas where you could usefully develop or seek assistance from others with different perspectives.

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The following lists show some of the behaviours used by each Leader/Manager Style™ that depend on recognising, using, understanding and managing emotions in yourself and in your relationships with others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do it Better</th>
<th>Innovator / Planner</th>
<th>Motivator / Facilitator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Move outside my ‘comfort zone’</td>
<td>• Build a sense of purpose and direction with the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be assertive</td>
<td>• Build collaborative relationships across the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tackle long-standing or ‘difficult issues’</td>
<td>• Show trust in the team’s ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with others to find ways around blockages</td>
<td>• Communicate in a positive inspiring way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build and communicate a shared vision for the organisation/area</td>
<td>• Make use of people’s strengths and abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Challenge the status quo and the ways that things are done</td>
<td>• Reveal own thoughts and feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Focus on the unit’s ‘customers’ and/or stakeholders</td>
<td>• Consider the impact of change on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage discussion around ideas for change</td>
<td>• Encourage others to contribute their ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitate change, not force it</td>
<td>• Speak up for the needs of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be creative and innovative</td>
<td>• Involve people in decisions affecting them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support people working on their own ideas</td>
<td>• Treat people equally and value diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaborate with others across boundaries</td>
<td>• Behave in an honest and ethical manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Welcome new ideas and act on them</td>
<td>• Be consistent, both in words and deeds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Make It Happen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do it Better</th>
<th>Implementer / Deliverer</th>
<th>Developer / Supporter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Give timely help and advice</td>
<td>• Show consideration and respect for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take responsibility for poor outcomes</td>
<td>• Build friendly relationships with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Manage uncertainty and complex situations</td>
<td>• Show concern about others’ needs/worries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be committed/persistent in achieving results</td>
<td>• Listen and pay close attention to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agree on shared roles and responsibilities for the team</td>
<td>• Seek and act on feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Openly discuss own attitudes and beliefs</td>
<td>• Learn from experience and adapt behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stay calm and manage my stress and emotion</td>
<td>• Seek opportunities to develop myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Demonstrate disciplined and logical thinking</td>
<td>• Negotiate and mediate to resolve issues/conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agree on shared roles and responsibilities for the team</td>
<td>• Get team issues and concerns openly aired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do what I say I will do</td>
<td>• Provide regular feedback and coaching to develop team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Persist in the face of problems or setbacks</td>
<td>• Actively seek opportunities for teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assess the risks and benefits of options before deciding</td>
<td>• Help people identify and use their strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide learning opportunities for team members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Activity – Applying the Leader/Manager Styles™

Reflect individually and then discuss in pairs your insights and thoughts about your preferences as a manager (given the outcome of your self-assessment survey) and how you work with others in your team. How will you use these insights to your advantage? What could you do differently to be more effective?

1. What do you enjoy the most in your own work role? What do you enjoy the least? How do these relate to your preferred Leader/Manager Style?

2. What Leader/Manager style(s) do you think you could be doing more of? How could you develop these further? How will this benefit you or others?

3. What are the possible Leader/Manager styles of the people you work with? Are their preferences similar or different to yours? Do you complement each other or conflict? How could you better support them?

4. Consider the emotionally-dependent behaviours shown for your preferred Leader/Manager Style™ and how you use them in your work role (previous page). Look at the behaviours of the other Styles – which do you also use in your role? What other behaviours would you like to develop to support your work with others?
SESSION 5: RECOGNISING OR PERCEIVING EMOTIONS

Recognising or perceiving emotions

Managing emotions

Understanding emotions

Using emotions
Recognising emotions in facial cues
Experts have identified 7 different universal facial expressions, each with distinctive visual cues which can be learnt:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td></td>
<td>A real smile always includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Crow’s feet wrinkles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Pushed up cheeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Movement from the muscle that orbits the eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td></td>
<td>This lasts only for a second:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Eyebrows raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Eyes widened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Mouth open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Drooping upper eyelids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Losing focus in eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Slight pulling down of lip corners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Eyebrows raised and pulled together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Raised upper eyelids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Tensed lower eyelids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lips slightly stretched horizontally back to ears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Eyebrows down and together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Eyes glare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Narrowing of the lips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Nose wrinkling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Upper lip raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contempt</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lip corner tightened and raised on only one side of face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mirror Neurons and Emotional Contagion

When we observe another person experiencing an emotional state we subconsciously begin to take on similar properties in our own emotional reactions. It is mirror neurons that enable humans to feel empathy.

Both positive and negative emotions are ‘contagious’. In a group situation the *emotional economy* is the sum total of the exchanges of feeling among the group. How the range of positive and negative feelings exchanged in an interaction are balanced out will determine whether it was a “good” interaction or a “bad” interaction (Goleman, 1998).

Emotional contagion creates significant implications for leadership. The higher the status of an individual in an organisation or group, the more influential their emotional state is on those around them.

Activity – Small group discussion

**Scenarios:**

1) One employee is expressing a strong negative attitude in a team meeting.
2) An emergency department waiting room is very full with many patients yet to be triaged.
3) You are leading your team in a discussion to brainstorm ideas for making your department’s work practices more environmentally friendly.
4) An executive level manager in your area has been visibly stressed and short-tempered over the last few weeks. You walk into the lunchroom where a few of your team members are talking about this manager’s behaviours.

Discuss as a group what strategies you could use to manage the emotional state of the group in your scenario.
Activity – Individual reflection

Think about a time when you have seen the emotional contagion effect occur within your own team or workplace. Reflecting on your learnings so far today, consider some strategies that you could use to help:

- Limit the impact of negative emotional contagion in themselves or team

- Utilise and promote the impact of positive emotional contagion in themselves or team
Activity – Cultural Competencies

‘Cultural Competence’ is simply defined as the awareness, knowledge, skills, practices and processes needed to function effectively and appropriately in culturally diverse situations in general and in particular interactions with people from different cultures.

At the individual and team level, achieving cultural competence is an ongoing process of learning about cultures, cultural adaptation and cross-cultural communication. To ensure that we are ‘culturally competent’ we need to:

Be prepared. Learn about cross-cultural communication and other cultures. Consider the members of your team – how many different cultures are represented?

Be aware of your own cultural values. What assumptions and expectations do you possess?

Explain some key differences in the cultures you have identified. The most important ones are often invisible. Note this may require further research.

Help team members to participate and embrace diversity. What are some ideas that you may consider to minimise the risk of team members feeling isolated?

The Cultural Dictionary put together by the ACT Migrant and Refugee Resource Service is a good resource around cultural norms for many cultures.
(https://static1.squarespace.com/static/557a2173e4b028e09773d463/t/561f446de4b0a20933f888a0/1444889709004/Cultural-Dictionary-and-Directory+2012.pdf)
SESSION 6: THINKING ABOUT AND COMMUNICATING EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE
**Emotional Vocabulary**

Part of emotional intelligence is noticing when you feel emotions. People with high emotional intelligence have highly developed and refined emotional vocabularies to enable them to categorise and discuss emotions effectively.

Interactions and experiences in the workplace can initiate a wide variety of different types of emotional responses in staff and managers. Often, it can be difficult for individuals to accurately name what emotion they are experiencing. Therefore, working to develop a wider emotional vocabulary, or range of words by which to explain emotional experiences, can help staff and managers understand their own emotions and communicate these to others. The below matrix can be a helpful tool to use to more accurately name and understand emotional experiences. This matrix also sheds light on the way in which emotions can change along a spectrum over time or under certain circumstances.

(Bradberry & Greaves, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity of Feelings</th>
<th>HAPPY</th>
<th>SAD</th>
<th>ANGRY</th>
<th>AFRAID</th>
<th>ASHAMED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH</strong></td>
<td>Elated</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
<td>Furious</td>
<td>Terrified</td>
<td>Sorrowful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>Agonized</td>
<td>Enraged</td>
<td>Hornified</td>
<td>Remorseful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overjoyed</td>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>Outraged</td>
<td>Scared stiff</td>
<td>Deformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thrilled</td>
<td>Hurt</td>
<td>Boiling</td>
<td>Worthless</td>
<td>Worthless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exuberant</td>
<td>Dejected</td>
<td>Ire</td>
<td>Disgraced</td>
<td>Worthless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecstatic</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
<td>Seething</td>
<td>Dishonored</td>
<td>Dishonored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fired up</td>
<td>Sorrowsful</td>
<td>Loathsome</td>
<td>Mortified</td>
<td>Mortified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td>Miserable</td>
<td>Betrayed</td>
<td>Admournished</td>
<td>Admournished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong></td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>Heartbroken</td>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>Apprehensive</td>
<td>Apologetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gratified</td>
<td>Sember</td>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>Frightened</td>
<td>Unworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Defended</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>Sneaky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relieved</td>
<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>Guilty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Let down</td>
<td>Agitated</td>
<td>Uneasy</td>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glowing</td>
<td>Melancholy</td>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>Intimidated</td>
<td>Secretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong></td>
<td>Glad</td>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>Perturbed</td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Bashful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contented</td>
<td>Moody</td>
<td>Annoyed</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>Ridiculous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Uptight</td>
<td>Worried</td>
<td>Regreful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>Resistant</td>
<td>Timid</td>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleased</td>
<td>Disappointed</td>
<td>Irritated</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Pitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mellow</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Irritated</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Silly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five core emotions run left to right across the top of the table. Manifestations of each emotion based upon the intensity felt are described down each of the columns in the table.
Activity – Awareness of our emotions

In this activity, you are asked to reflect upon a short period of time and identify all the emotions you felt over that period.

1. Consider a set timeframe, for example, from when you got up today until now. You may also like to make a time period in the last few days if you prefer. Individually list all the emotions you felt during that timeframe – as many as you can.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

When did your emotional state not support the activity or interaction you were undertaking? What emotional state would have been more effective?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
2. Break into small groups / pairs to discuss aspects of the list you feel comfortable sharing. Ask each person to explain what they were feeling, the context of that emotion and triggers, reasons or causes.
Emotional self-check tool

**Name it**
- Identify which emotion you are feeling at the moment.

**Ask**
- What is the effect of this emotion on me? (e.g. Losing focus on my task; Feel my heart beating faster)
- What is the effect of this emotion on others around me? (e.g. Are others becoming defensive towards me? Are others getting excited? Do others seem to want to spend time around me?)

**Consider**
- Is this emotion helpful at the moment?

**Act**
- If the emotion is **helpful** at the moment, continue on!
- If it is **not helpful**, think of one simple action you can do now to move towards a different emotional state and then do it. (e.g. take a five minute break; reflect on your priorities for the day; speak to your colleagues; complete a small task; slowly breath in and out three times)

**Resource:** Another helpful resource for identifying emotions is the “Mood Meter App” developed by researchers at the Yale Centre for Emotional Intelligence. More information can be found at:

http://ei.yale.edu/mood-meter-app/
Activity – Mood/Task Match

Group 1
Your team has recently welcomed three new staff members. You think it is appropriate to coordinate a team building activity to help the team adjust to these changes.

Group 2
You have received a complaint about patient care which affects all members of your team. You need to communicate this complaint to them and introduce an amended policy.

Group 3
There is an opportunity to apply for a grant for your team to undertake a special project. You want to meet with the team to get them to generate ideas to put forward for the grant.

In your groups, decide which setting you would choose for your scenario. Determine what mood you need to elicit in your staff and how you would go about doing this. If the meeting were to go “off-track” how could you focus the team back to your intended topic and discussion?

Think about any ‘pre-communication’. What would it look like? Consider the benefits of verbal or written communication. How can you convey emotion and intent in either of these forms of communication?
### The Four Communication Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear and Direct</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Plain</td>
<td>An employee is unhappy with their co-worker and says to them, “Your contributions to our group project were lacklustre, and we’d like you to provide more support in the future.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Succinct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Healthy communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear and Indirect</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Many people are addressed</td>
<td>An employee is unhappy with their co-worker and expresses displeasure to a group of co-workers by saying, “I get really annoyed when people don’t pull their weight around here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Allusions are made to topics without specifically targeting an individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masked and Direct</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Muddled, unclear message</td>
<td>An employee is annoyed with their co-worker says to them, “People in this office used to work a lot harder.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Delivered to a third party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masked and Indirect</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Message and intended recipient are unclear</td>
<td>An employee addresses a group of co-workers and says, “This office just isn’t doing what it needs to be doing lately.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Four Communication Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assertive</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Straightforward</td>
<td>A nurse tells a patient, “Your condition requires a surgical procedure, but with some follow-up therapy, I’m confident you’ll start to feel better in a matter of days.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Honest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- &quot;I&quot; statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggressive</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Often inappropriate in professional settings</td>
<td>A nurse tells a patient, “You’re going to die of lung cancer if you don’t quit smoking.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Characterised by “you” statements and accusations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Placates another individual</td>
<td>A nurse gives into a patient’s demands for stronger prescription medication, rather than following the proper diagnostic schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Timid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive-aggressive</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fusion of passive and aggressive</td>
<td>A nurse tells her patient, “I’ve told you my diagnosis, but clearly you’re the medical expert here so just do what you want.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unclear/confusing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sarcasm, ridicule or insinuations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SESSION 7: UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Recognising or perceiving emotions
- Managing emotions
- Understanding emotions
- Using emotions
Activity – The flow of emotions

Emotions follow logical processes (sequencing along a spectrum from low to high intensity).

Please discuss what emotions the people in the following scenarios may be feeling and how their emotions may change over time/under given circumstances.

For example, Sam has just been advised he is not going to be acting team leader any longer. How might he feel? Think of at least a few options:

- He is angry – he feels betrayed. He is afraid. He asks himself whether there is another job out there.
- He is uncertain about the impact this will have on his career. Will I be seen as a failure by upper management?
- He is relieved – I knew this was not the job for me. I often thought about resigning; this has just forced the issue.
- He is sad – I will miss the status it gave me.
- He is worried – will the team accept me back as ‘one of the gang’?

Scenario

A restructure has been announced of your team and service. This is part of a wider review of all Allied Health teams to bring them in line with others in the LHD. You have three staff members.

Susan has been with the team longer than you, she has been here 14 years. She likes things the way they are and is not usually a fan of change, although she also has some complaints about how things are done.

What may Sue be feeling? What types of factors might influence how she might feel in the situation?
Marcus joined the team two years ago, he keeps to himself a lot and after some initial energy and floating of new ideas and ways of doing things, he settled down and into a rhythm. You find him easy to manage. He manages his case load well and rarely needs anything much from you.

What may Marcus be feeling? What types of factors might influence how he might feel in the situation?

Kim joined the team just a few months ago, she is young, newly qualified and enjoying the work. This is her first role out of university.

What may Kim be feeling? What types of factors might influence how she might feel in the situation?

What could you do as a manager (with this knowledge) to better support your team through the transition?
Additional video resources on empathy

The following video resources are available if you wish to consider the topic of empathy in the workplace further in your own time:

- Brené Brown on Sympathy versus Empathy
  [https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=1Eywqu369Jw](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=1Eywqu369Jw)

- Chade-Meng Tan TED Talk on “Everyday Compassion at Google”
  In this video, the topic of how a large corporation (Google) practices compassion and emotional intelligence in its daily operations is explored.
  [https://www.ted.com/talks/chade_meng_tan_everyday_compassion_at_google](https://www.ted.com/talks/chade_meng_tan_everyday_compassion_at_google)

- Small Acts of Kindness
  This video is a resource which was produced by NSW Health in 2014. This video explores the way in which empathy is displayed by NSW Health employees on a daily basis in the work that they carry out and the relationships that NSW Health employees develop with patients, carers and other staff members.
  **TRIGGER WARNING:** This video clip contains emotional content and may be triggering, especially related to the topics of miscarriage, loss of an adult child and divorce.
  This clip can be accessed by searching for “Small Acts of Kindness” in the My Health Learning portal or via this link: [https://vimeo.com/91487051](https://vimeo.com/91487051)
SESSION 8: MANAGING EMOTIONS AT WORK
The Window of Tolerance

The ‘window of tolerance’: maintaining optimal arousal for trauma-focused therapy

- Hyperarousal: too much arousal to integrate
  - Emotional reactivity
  - Hypervigilance
  - Intrusive imagery
  - Obsessive/cyclical cognitive processing
  - Tension, shaking, ungrounded

- Hypoarousal: too little arousal to integrate
  - Flat affect
  - Inability to think clearly
  - Numbing
  - Collapse

‘Window of tolerance’
Optimal arousal zone

(Adapted from Oggen and Minton 2000)
Building your team’s emotional intelligence

An emotionally intelligent manager has the ability to unlock the productivity, creativity and innovation of the team (Cole, 2013, p. 393). They are aware of and take into account the emotions of the team members, the mood of the team and the relationships the team has with groups and individuals outside the team.

To promote the development of self-awareness of others, the manager can:

- Provide opportunities for others to express their thoughts and feelings
- Assist others to understand the effect of their behaviour and emotions on others in the workplace
- Encourage the self-management of emotions in others
- Encourage others to develop their own emotional intelligence to build productive relationships and maximise workplace outcomes
- Encourage a positive emotional climate in the workplace
- Use the strengths of workgroup members to achieve workplace outcomes
- Communicate with a diverse workforce which has varying cultural expressions of emotion
- Use knowledge of emotional intelligence to build workplace relationships

Emotional intelligence skills and behaviours can enhance the communication in the team by encouraging team members with different perspectives to participate in appropriate ways to develop an understanding of points of views. This requires treating people with respect, listening with empathy and being open to new and different ideas. In the NSW Public Service this is known as ‘effective dialogue’ (NSW Public Service Commission, 2015) and is an example of emotional intelligence in practice.

Mindfulness Resources

http://www.monash.edu/health/mindfulness/resources
https://www.mindfulness.org.au/resources

See full list of resources provided in the appendix.
Self-reflection
How do I demonstrate self-awareness?


How do I show that I am effectively managing my emotions?


How do I act to inspire people?


How do I show that I care about people?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

How do I deploy social skills to build networks and win agreement for my proposals?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
SESSION 9: ACTION PLANNING AND WRAP UP

Having completed our learning, this part of the course asks you to reflect on what you have learned and what actions you will take.

Reflection

What emotions have you experienced over the course of the day?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

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__________________________________________________________________________

What are the implications of these (if any)?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Reflection – Learnings and action plan

My key learning from this course are...

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

As a result of this day, I want to ...

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
SECTION 3: REFERENCES AND RESOURCES


Cole, 2013, Management Theory and Practice 5th Ed, Pearson Australia

Communicating effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people


Grant, J., 2009, Leader as coach workbook, Dattner Grant, Australia.


Managing Personal and Team Effectiveness, 2000, Health and Social Services Management, Open Learning, Open University, UK.

McKay, T. 2014, Science shows how the brains of intelligent, successful people are different from everyone else, Mic, viewed 29 May 2017, https://mic.com/articles/89579/science-shows-how-the-brains-of-intelligent-successful-people-are-different-from-everyone-else#.xEB1ONLeA.


Further learning opportunities:
My Health Learning online module: Emotional Intelligence.

Meditation and Emotion Apps:
- Buddhify2
- Headspace
- Happify
- Happier
- In Flow
- Mood Meter
- Self-awareness Log
- Smiling Mind

Brain Training Apps:
- Brains!
- Brain Trainer
- E-Catch
- Epositivespin
- Faces + Names
- Knowledge
- My Calm Beat

Mindfulness Resources:
- http://www.monash.edu/health/mindfulness/resources
- https://www.mindfulness.org.au/resources
Think back to Session 3: Growth mindsets. Given the material discussed in that session take some time to reflect on the following questions:

1) What beliefs do you have that either promote or limit your own or your team’s success?

2) Where do these sit in the fixed/growth mindset dimension – are they clearly fixed or the other, or a bit of both?
3) What growth mindset could you use to move beyond a limiting belief?
   
   E.g. “Everyone and every situation is capable of change. It takes commitment, effort, thinking about things in the right way, seeking help/support from others who might be able to help…”

Now take some time to think back to the Leader/Manager Styles information in Session 4. Look over your activity notes, then think about your team. Spend time considering:

1) Are there any Leader/Manager Styles missing from the potential preferences in your team as a whole?
2) How could you work with others to ensure that you cover the full range of roles in your team?
Additional reading on oral and written communication

Oral Communication Skills and Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Introduction
Communication skills are vital in the field of nursing. In addition to the wide range of technical proficiencies nurses need to properly diagnose, treat, and provide comfort for patients, they must also appropriately communicate with the people in their care, building strong relationships with patients and families. As healthcare expert Sarah Connor noted in Nursing Times: “Nurses provide the ‘glue’ – escorting a patient into the consulting room; identifying with challenges in adhering to lifestyle changes by reporting their own experience; allowing patients to disclose concerns not shared with doctors; being chatty; sharing a joke; and providing explanations where doctors’ communication has failed.”

Here, we’ll discuss the various schools of thought pertaining to the ways humans interact with one another, and how these different modes apply to the field of professional nursing. We’ll also delve into some common workplace problems associated with communication and explore effective strategies for overcoming these obstacles.

The Four Styles & Behaviors of Communication
Let’s begin with a few standard definitions. According to Professor Robert C. Nielsen of North Dakota State University, there are four general communication styles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Four Communication Styles</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear and Direct</td>
<td>Plainly and succinctly stating your message to the appropriate person. Dr. Nielsen calls this “the most healthy form of communication.”</td>
<td>An employee is unhappy with their coworker and says to them, “Your contributions to our group project were lackluster, and we’d like you to provide more support in the future.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear and Indirect</td>
<td>Multiple people are addressed and allusions are made to certain topics without specifically targeting the individual for whom the message is intended.</td>
<td>An employee is unhappy with their coworker and expresses displeasure to a group of coworkers by saying, “I get really annoyed when people don’t pull their weight around here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masked and Direct</td>
<td>This style occurs when someone delivers a muddled, unclear message to another individual. The target is aware he/she is the intended recipient, but may not understand what the message means, or even why he/she is being addressed.</td>
<td>An employee is annoyed with their coworker says to them, “People in this office used to work a lot harder.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masked and Indirect</td>
<td>This is when the message and the intended recipient are unclear. Dr. Nielsen is critical of ‘masked and indirect,’ citing it as a common characteristic of ‘unhealthy relationships.’</td>
<td>An employee addresses a group of coworkers and says, “This office just isn’t doing what it needs to be doing lately.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Four Communication Behaviors

These styles manifest as the following four communication behaviors. We provide real-world examples centered around the nurse-patient relationship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assertive</strong></td>
<td>Assertive behavior is straightforward and honest without being inappropriate or belligerent; this is the preferred communication style. “I” statements and objective terms are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A nurse tells a patient, “Your condition requires a surgical procedure, but with some follow-up therapy, I’m confident you’ll start to feel better in a matter of days.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggressive</strong></td>
<td>The aggressive approach should only be used to maintain control over a belligerent individual; otherwise, it is considered inappropriate within a professional setting. Aggressive behavior is characterized by “you” statements, accusations, and subjective terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A nurse tells a patient, “You’re going to die of lung cancer if you don’t quit smoking.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive</strong></td>
<td>Passive behavior involves the concession of needs and rights in order to placate another individual. Whereas aggressive people tend to view themselves as superior to others, passive individuals often suffer from feelings of insecurity and timidity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A nurse gives into a patient’s demands for stronger prescription medication, rather than following the proper diagnostic schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive-aggressive</strong></td>
<td>In addition to the previous three (which are often considered the three, core communication behaviors), this fusion of two, seemingly contradictory behaviors occur when someone expresses their “needs and feelings in an unclear and confusing manner,” says Dr. Nielsen. It often includes components of sarcasm, ridicule, and insinuations about others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A nurse tells her patient, “I’ve told you my diagnosis, but clearly you’re the medical expert here so just do what you want.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Components of Effective Communication

Adopting a clear, direct style and taking an assertive behavioral approach are two methods of using strong communication in the workplace. Oftentimes, these practices will lead to career growth and long-term professional success. Building on the styles and behaviors listed above, here are four components of oral communication that can be honed to create a dynamic workplace environment for you and your colleagues.

Tone

1. “Tone” refers to the emotions and attitudes conveyed through the level, volume, and pace of one’s voice. Tone does not necessarily correlate to the message, and if the speaker isn’t careful, their delivery can result in a confused audience. For example, if a manager is attempting to give employees a pep talk, but comes off as unenthusiastic or sarcastic, the employees are likely to leave the meeting unsure of how to approach their tasks. Your tone should always be clear, confident, and friendly; never sarcastic, condescending, or disinterested. Joyce E.A. Russell, who serves as the director of the Executive Coaching and Leadership Development Program at The University of Maryland’s Robert H. Smith School of Business, recently discussed ways to improve tone in a Washington Post article. She notes the following three-step approach can be used to modify one’s tone and deliver a clearer, more pointed message:

   - **Step 1:** Ask your coworkers and managers for feedback about tone, emphasizing confidence vs. insecurity. Additionally, tape yourself with a voice recorder and listen to yourself.
   - **Step 2:** Once you have an accurate understanding of how your tone sounds to others, consult with one of your most trusted colleagues. Ask this person for constructive criticism that will enable you to further improve your workplace habits.
   - **Step 3:** Practice using an improved tone in front of coworkers or associates who are not necessarily familiar with your speaking habits. If it feels appropriate, seek positive feedback from them as well.

Body Language

1. Improving your nonverbal communication habits can actually improve the way you verbally interact with others. Like tone, body language will essentially contradict the speaker’s message if it does not correspond with what is being said. Henrik Edberg, a contributor to The Positivity Blog, notes the following telltale signs of good (or poor) body language, and encourages others to optimize their nonverbal communication skills using a mirror at home:

   - **Eyes:** You should make eye contact with whoever is speaking to you, but also do your best not to stare blankly at that person. Too much eye contact can make others uncomfortable, while no eye contact will make you appear insecure.
   - **Head:** Be sure to nod; this will indicate you’ve understood what your coworker has told you, and that you are receptive to his or her ideas. Also, be sure to keep your head upright; staring at the ground will make you seem disinterested or distracted.
   - **Face:** According to Edberg, touching your face “might make you seem nervous and can be distracting for the listeners or the people in the conversation.”
   - **Mouth:** Smile and laugh when appropriate. This will demonstrate your engagement in the current conversation — but grinning ear-to-ear for too long may come off as disingenuous.
   - **Shoulders:** Be sure to relax both shoulders; otherwise you’ll appear tense. If you are naturally stiff-shouldered, try loosening them up before you get to work by shaking them or stretching your neck.
• **Arms and legs:** “Don’t cross your arms and legs,” Edberg warns. This will tell others you feel “defensive or guarded.”

• **Hands:** Fidgeting is one of the surest signals of poor body language. Constantly moving your hands will distract others — but infrequent, controlled pointing or gesturing will help you deliver a clearer message. Also, avoid using drinks or other objects to block your face. This is a sign of timidity.

• **Whole body:** Avoid standing too close to other people, and try not to “lean in” too excessively. These actions are often perceived as aggressive, and most people will not respond positively.

**Listening**

1. Absorbing and appropriately reacting to another person’s message is just as crucial as communicating your own message confidently and clearly. Mind Tools, a website dedicated to improving professional skills, offers the following tips for **active listening**:

   • **Pay attention:** Give the speaker your full attention, and demonstrate your engagement with eye contact; don’t let yourself be distracted by other conversations or the need to “mentally prepare a rebuttal.”

   • **Show that you’re listening:** Use body language to indicate the speaker has your undivided attention. Nodding, smiling, and using good posture will all accomplish this end.

   • **Provide feedback:** “Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear,” notes the Mind Tools tutorial. Clarifying questions and statements (“So, what you’re saying is…”) will tell the speaker you’ve been paying attention, and that you have your own thoughts about what has been said.

   • **Defer judgment:** Rather than interrupting or arguing with the speaker before he/she is finished, allow that person to conclude the message and then offer constructive, non-argumentative points of view if your opinion is different.

   • **Respond appropriately:** This is a great point to practice clear/direct style and assertive behavior. Be honest and straightforward with the speaker about the message without over-criticizing or broaching subjects that are irrelevant to the topic at hand.

“It takes a lot of concentration and determination to be an active listener,” the Mind Tools article concludes. “Be deliberate with your listening and remind yourself frequently that your goal is to truly hear what the other person is saying. Set aside all other thoughts and behaviors and concentrate on the message. Ask questions, reflect, and paraphrase to ensure you understand the message.”
**Emotional Intelligence: EQ**

1. EQ stands for *emotional quotient* (or ‘emotional intelligence’), the ability to effectively express and manage feelings when interacting with our family members, friends, and colleagues. As noted by Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Melinda Smith, M.A., in an article for HelpGuide.org, EQ consists of four basic components:

   - **Self-awareness:** People with high EQ are cognizant of the emotions they are conveying, and recognize that thoughts and behavior trigger self-confidence.

   - **Self-management:** High EQ is linked to the ability to suppress unhealthy urges and rein in compulsive feelings; effective self-management allows us to “take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.”

   - **Social awareness:** In addition to recognizing their own emotions, high-EQ individuals can also perceive the feelings and attitudes of other people, and modify their own style and behavior to accommodate them.

   - **Relationship management:** Healthy interaction with spouses, children, parents, friends, and close coworkers is a hallmark of high EQ.

**How to Improve Your EQ**

How do we build EQ? Segal and Smith suggest the following five strategies:

1. **“Rapidly reduce stress in the moment.”**
   Stress is one of the factors that most detrimentally affects one’s EQ. Immediately recognizing stressful feelings, identifying how/how well you respond when stress sets in, and mitigating stress in healthy, productive ways will boost your EQ and improve your general outlook across the board — but especially at work. “If you tend to become angry or agitated under stress, you will respond best to stress-relieving activities that quiet you down,” the authors note. “If you tend to become depressed or withdrawn, you will respond best to stress-relieving activities that are stimulating. If you tend to freeze—speeding up in some ways while slowing down in others—you need stress-relieving activities that provide both comfort and stimulation.”

2. **“Beat relationship stress with emotional awareness.”**
   Everyone reacts to stress differently. Some endure a proverbial rollercoaster of emotions during stressful moments, others experience physical discomfort, and there are even those who naturally shut down and refuse to address the situation at hand. None of these responses are particularly healthy, but “having a relationship with your emotions” will at least prepare you for stressful moments and allow you to let the moment pass and reconnect with your surroundings in a positive manner.

3. **“Use nonverbal communication.”**
   This corresponds to the body language strategies listed above. If you find yourself in a confrontation or argument with a coworker, you can mitigate the stressfulness of the situation through eye contact, sincere smiling and nodding, non-aggressive stance, and calm facial expressions.
4. “Use humor and play to deal with challenges.”
This will not always be the most appropriate response, but a joke or innocuous comment will often alleviate the stress and tension that accompany confrontational encounters, and enable you to work through seemingly impassable differences with other people. This method also works when it comes to relieving your own stress independently of other individuals. Don’t sweat the details, learn from your mistakes (instead of dwelling on them), and find ways to relax once the stressful moment has passed.

5. “Resolve conflict positively.”
“It takes two people to keep an argument going,” the authors note. “You can choose to disengage from a conflict, even if you still disagree.” By resolving little conflicts and finding ways to overcome the major ones, you’ll be able to foster positive interaction with those around you — even if you don’t always agree with them. Now that we’ve discussed ways to improve style, behavior, and other components of communication, we can explore specific ways for professional nurses to put these skills into practice.

Professional Communication Obstacles: Nursing
Not surprisingly, communication problems are an everyday occurrence in most workplace settings. This section will discuss ways to use style, behavior, and the other communication skills listed above to address three difficulties commonly found in professional nursing:

Discussing Difficult Medical Issues
RNAs care for patients who are dealing with a wide range of medical conditions, many of which are chronic — and terminal, in some cases. Nurses are obligated to discuss these issues with patients in a manner that is honest, straightforward, and easy for non-medically trained individuals to understand. Megan M. Krischke, a contributor for NurseZone.com, notes that one of the most common mistakes in nursing is “failing to assess a patient’s health care literacy and then speaking to them in terms they understand.” Nurses, she says, should not only evaluate each patient’s ability to understand medical terminology and treatment procedures, but also “intervene” by assisting them as they navigate the confusing network of doctors, specialists, and care providers.

One area of medicine where this skill is crucial is palliative care, which is reserved for patients with terminal conditions who are nearing the end of their lives. In a journal entry for Oxford Medicine Online, Lesley Fallowfield writes that honest, open communication is key “if patients are to be permitted the dignity of deciding how to spend their remaining time.” This level of honesty can be difficult for nurses to present — and difficult for patients and their families to digest — but studies have shown that most people would much rather hear the truth in situations like these. By using the clear/direct, assertive approach, maintaining an empathetic tone, practicing confident body language, and minimizing the level of visible emotion, nurses, can provide terminal patients and their loved ones with the information they need without exacerbating an already traumatic experience.
Adapting to Cultural Challenges

The United States is a highly diverse nation, and nurses who practice here must treat patients from a wide range of ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Members of certain groups tend to be more resistant to modern medicine, while others are morally opposed to routine procedures like blood transfusions or certain childbirth methods. In fact, a 2014 survey from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) found that only 4% of U.S. citizens are trained medical professionals — meaning that 96% of the country’s population “probably define good health or wellness” in terms that are different from those used within the medical community.

NurseTogether.com contributor Lanette Anderson recently penned an article in which she described the importance of ‘cultural competence.’ “Barriers to cultural sensitivity,” she notes, include racism, sexism, religious intolerance, and general stereotyping of certain groups. Nurses should never make assumptions about patients or their families, but simply use their medical training to provide the highest level of treatment and care at all times without lending credence to uninformed beliefs about medicine and healthcare. Cultural competence, Anderson says, requires effective verbal and nonverbal communication — and in cases when patients have difficulty understanding English, the latter takes on a greater level of importance.

Handling Poor Communications with Doctors or Other Nurses

Hospitals, clinics, and physician’s offices can be very hectic workplace environments — and poorly communicated instructions will only add to the chaos. Healthcare Traveler contributor James M. Fraleigh urges nurses to present themselves with confidence and professionalism beginning with their first day at their workplace. Newly hired nurses should go above and beyond to show their supervisors and peers that they have the technical — and interpersonal — skills needed to do their jobs properly.

But inevitably, communication between nurses and doctors will break down from time to time. "In the real world, physicians may be rude, dismissive or intimidating," noted Beth Greenwood in a recent article on Chron.com. "Nurses may also contribute to problems by failing to communicate or engaging in open conflict." These situations call for stress management, high EQ, and effective verbal communication between colleagues. If possible, nurses and doctors with conflicting opinions should collaborate during high-stress situations to ensure the patient in question receives all of the necessary care — and then openly discuss their experience after the fact using some of the active listening strategies discussed above.

We can’t simply master good communication skills, and then just move on. Direct style, assertive behavior, clear tone, effective body language, active listening, and high emotional intelligence all require retraining and retooling throughout the course of our adult lives — and we enter different life stages, we may find that new and different strategies work better than methods that have been useful in the past.
Additional Resources

If you would like to learn more about building and maintaining strong communication skills, the following web resources feature insightful tips and anecdotal advice for improving the way you speak and listen to others.

- **Collaborative Learning and Integrated Mentoring in the Biosciences (CLIMB):** This four-part oral communication lecture series tackles different strategies for delivering effective scientific presentations and collaborating with colleagues in medical/scientific settings.

- **Emotional Intelligence Consortium (EIC):** This website is dedicated to the latest research, surveys, and other findings related to EQ.

- **‘It’s Not Your Mouth That Speaks Volumes’**: This article from *Bloomberg Businessweek* explores some effective strategies for improving body language and communicating with professional colleagues.

- **Listening First Aid: an Empathic Approach:** This 15-part podcast series from the University of California explores ways for adults to be more active listeners within a professional setting.

- **Physician cultural competence: Cross-cultural communication improves care:** This 2014 report from the Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine explores trends and findings related to treatment and healthcare of minority groups in the United States.

- **Leadership Academy:** This blog from *Nursing Times* features posts that discuss ways to foster an environment of collaboration and creative problem-solving within medical workplace environments.
**Communication style questionnaire**

This questionnaire is designed to help you assess your preferred communication style. Thinking about your behaviour at work, write a score against each statement to represent which best typifies your behaviour where 4 = agree strongly, 3 = agree somewhat, 2 = disagree somewhat, 1 = disagree strongly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I express my opinions in an honest and appropriate manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I can get angry and let this show.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find it difficult to say ‘no’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If I do not agree with a task that my boss has given me, I find a way of dragging my feet on it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel comfortable in asking for help from someone if they know more than me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel guilty if I leave on time for a valid reason and other people are still working.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can be sarcastic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I think my way of doing things is better than other people’s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. If someone takes advantage of me, I find a way of evening the score.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I feel I have a right to say no to other people’s requests and to negotiate a compromise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. If I am in a large meeting, I find I do not speak up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I like to be in control of a situation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I stare people down.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I make good eye contact with other people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If I am unsure about a task that I have been given, I find it uncomfortable to ask for help.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I talk about other people behind their backs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. When I have to deal with someone in authority, I find it difficult to look them directly in the eye.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I am a good listener and equally other people listen to what I have to say.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Rather than confronting someone about an issue, I would rather give them the cold shoulder or drop hints to other people that I am not happy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am not afraid to be direct with someone, even if they think I am being rude.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Self-assessment: Results**

To assess your preferred communication style, transfer the scores you have given to each statement to the boxes below. Then total each column downwards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>Q8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>Q12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>Q16</td>
<td>Q13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>Q17</td>
<td>Q19</td>
<td>Q20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total: | Total: | Total: | Total: |

- **ASSERTIVE**
- **PASSIVE**
- **PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE**
- **AGGRESSIVE**

Look at the column where your score is the highest. This is the communication style you use most of the time.
### Communication styles and their implications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directness of Communication</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>THOUGHT GIVEN TO OTHERS</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>OPENLY AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR</td>
<td>ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am direct in expressing my needs, wants and opinions and I give no thought to other people’s.</td>
<td>I clearly express my needs, wants and opinions in a way which is considerate of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WIN, YOU LOSE</td>
<td>I WIN, YOU WIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR</td>
<td>PASSIVE BEHAVIOUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I indirectly make sure that others are aware of my needs, wants and opinions and that these are more important than theirs.</td>
<td>I do not express my needs, wants and opinions directly. I put others’ needs above my own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I WIN, YOU LOSE</td>
<td>I LOSE, YOU WIN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY IDEAS

The Chocolate Meditation (5 minutes plus debrief)
Resources required:
- A variety box of chocolates (e.g., bite size favourites)
- Dried fruit option in case of allergies
- Internet connection
- Speakers

This meditation is a fun introduction to the practice of mindfulness. It encourages you to begin to think about an ordinary daily activity (such as eating) in a new and more mindful way.

Set the chocolates out in a central spot (e.g., a handful in the middle of each table), then sit back and relax, before playing the audio track for the meditation.


After the audio track is finished, consider how you found the experience and what it might look like to incorporate small mindfulness activities like this into your working day as means of keeping “grounded” and regaining focus for yourself.

Reference:

10 finger gratitude exercise (5-10 minutes)
Gratitude exercises have been proven to have tangible benefits. According to one study conducted by researchers at the University of Florida, the process of writing down a list of positive events at the close of a day (and why these events made them happy) lowered participants’ self-reported stress levels and gave them a greater sense of calm at night (Huffington, 2014).

For this activity, take 5 minutes to engage in the “ten finger gratitude exercise” in which once a day you list ten things that they are grateful for and count them out on your fingers. You may also choose to write these down in a notepad or diary.

The point of this exercise is to intentionally bring into awareness the tiny, previously unnoticed elements of the day.

After doing this, consider what the experience was like, and how you may incorporate such an activity into their daily working lives.

Reference:

Feedback reflection activity (10 minutes plus debrief)
An important element of mindfulness in the workplace is for you to be consciously thinking about their role in the organisation and how engaged you are with your work and/or team.

Take 10 minutes to give yourself feedback on the questions provided below:

- What actions did I take today to learn and grow?
- Whom did I thank today, and who recognized me?
- Was I mindful today of our company’s long-term goals?
- How engaged was I at work today?
- What did I do today to improve communication with my team?

Reference:

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**Body scan (10 minutes)**

The mindfulness body scan exercise is a method of helping you to be aware of your physical self and “ground yourself”. This activity is designed to relax the body and allow you to focus your mind. In doing so, you may find that you are able to more freely identify your own emotional states and manage your emotions more effectively.

To do this exercise get in a comfortable position with nothing in your hands. Then work through the following script:

*Begin by bringing your attention into your body.*

*You can close your eyes if that’s comfortable for you.*

*You can notice your body seated wherever you’re seated, feeling the weight of your body on the chair, on the floor.*

*Take a few deep breaths.*

*And as you take a deep breath, bring in more oxygen enlivening the body. And as you exhale, have a sense of relaxing more deeply.*

*You can notice your feet on the floor, notice the sensations of your feet touching the floor. The weight and pressure, vibration, heat.*

*You can notice your legs against the chair, pressure, pulsing, heaviness, lightness.*

*Notice your back against the chair.*

*Bring your attention into your stomach area. If your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Take a break.*

*Notice your hands. Are your hands tense or tight. See if you can allow them to soften.*

*Notice your arms. Feel any sensation in your arms. Let your shoulders be soft.*
Notice your neck and throat. Let them be soft. Relax.

Soften your jaw. Let your face and facial muscles be soft.

Then notice your whole body present. Take one more breath.

Be aware of your whole body as best you can. Take a breath. And then when you’re ready, you can open your eyes.”

After completing the script, consider how the exercise felt and whether it is something that you may be able to incorporate into your own working life.

Reference:

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**Body scan – audio clip (3 minutes plus brief)**

Resources required:

- Audio clip from [http://marc.ucla.edu/mpeg/Body-Scan-Meditation.mp3](http://marc.ucla.edu/mpeg/Body-Scan-Meditation.mp3)

The mindfulness body scan exercise is a method of helping you to be aware of your physical selves and “ground yourself”. This activity is designed to relax the body and allow you to focus your mind. In doing so, you may find that you are able to more freely identify your own emotional states and manage your emotions more effectively.

Get into a comfortable position and then play the audio clip from: [http://marc.ucla.edu/mpeg/Body-Scan-Meditation.mp3](http://marc.ucla.edu/mpeg/Body-Scan-Meditation.mp3) (3.00 minutes).

After listening to the clip, consider the exercise felt and whether it is something that they may be able to incorporate into your own working life.

Reference:
The Three Minute Breathing Space (3 minute guided script plus debrief)

This exercise is designed to help you to become aware of and regulate your emotional responses. Find a comfortable position to sit in, with nothing in your hands, then work through the following script:

The three minute breathing space is a brief practice and can be used when we find our thoughts or mood spiralling in a negative direction. The first thing we do with this practice because we want to come into the present moment quickly is to take a very definite posture. The back is erect, but not stiff, letting the body express a sense of being present and awake. Now, closing your eyes, if this feels comfortable, take the first step of becoming aware of what is going on with you right now. Becoming conscious of what is going through your mind: what thoughts are around? Here again, as best you can, just noting thoughts as mental events...so we note them, and then we note the feelings that are around at the moment...in particular, turning toward any sense of discomfort or unpleasant feelings. So, rather than try to push them away or shut them out, just notice them, perhaps saying, “Ah there you are; that’s how it is right now.” Similarly, with sensations in the body... are there sensations of tensions, of holding, of letting go? And again, becoming aware of them, simply noting whatever is arising in this moment. So, you have a sense of what is going on right now, having stepped out of automatic pilot.

The second step is to collect your awareness by focusing on a single act - the movement of the breath. So now really gather yourself, focusing your attention down in the movements of the abdomen, the rise and fall of the belly as the breath moves in and out...spending a minute or so to focus on the motion of the abdominal wall, moment by moment, breath by breath, as best you can right here, right now. Noticing when the breath is moving in, and when the breath is moving out, being with the breath as it moves into your body and out, binding your awareness to this process, to be present right now.

The third step, is allowing your awareness to expand to the entire body, bringing a more spacious awareness to your experience, letting the breath be present but in the background. Bringing attention to the entire length of the body from head to toe, including any tightness or sensations related to holding or bracing. In this moment holding your awareness in this spaciousness place, breathing in and breathing out. (Silence)

And when you are ready, opening your eyes, letting go of this brief practice.


After completing the script, consider how the exercise felt and whether it is something that you may be able to incorporate into your own working lives. Reflect upon how activities like this may be able to help you to increase your emotional awareness and self-management.

Reference:

**The five senses exercise (5 minutes plus debrief)**

This exercise is called “five senses”, and provides guidelines on practicing mindfulness quickly in nearly any situation. All that is needed is to notice something you are experiencing with each of the five senses.

Facilitator to provide participants instructions to follow through this exercise engaging their five senses in a mindful way.

- Notice five things that you can **see**.
  
  Look around you and bring your attention to five things that you can see. Pick something that you don’t normally notice, like a shadow or a small crack in the concrete.

- Notice four things that you can **feel**.
  
  Bring awareness to four things that you are currently feeling, like the texture of your pants, the feeling of the breeze on your skin, or the smooth surface of a table you are resting your hands on.

- Notice three things you can **hear**.
  
  Take a moment to listen, and note three things that you hear in the background. This can be the chirp of a bird, the hum of the refrigerator, or the faint sounds of traffic from a nearby road.

- Notice two things you can **smell**.
  
  Bring your awareness to smells that you usually filter out, whether they’re pleasant or unpleasant. Perhaps the breeze is carrying a whiff of pine trees if you’re outside, or the smell of a cafe across the street.

- Notice one thing you can **taste**.
  
  Focus on one thing that you can taste right now, in this moment. You can take a sip of a drink, chew a piece of gum, eat something, or just notice the current taste in your mouth or open your mouth to search the air for a taste.

This is a quick and relatively easy exercise to bring you to a mindful state quickly.

After completing the exercise, consider how the exercise felt and whether it is something that you may be able to incorporate into your own working life. Reflect upon how activities like this may be able to help you to increase your emotional awareness and self-management.

Reference:
