



GAME CHANGERS

GAMING SKILLS AND THE WORKPLACE

VERBAL COMMUNICATION



Literacy Link South Central



Verbal Communication: Participant Playbook

This participant playbook is part of a series created for the course “Game Changers: Gaming Skills and the Workplace.” Built in a modular fashion to allow for maximum flexibility, this course provides training on real-world skills that can be developed and practiced in a game-based environment. Using a combination of facilitated lessons, activities, research, and games, this course will help teach a new generation of job seekers the 21st Century soft skills critical to Canadian employers. Modules in this course include:



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Agenda:

1. What is verbal communication?
2. Activity: What a Bunch of Baloney
3. Registers of Language
4. Simplifying Complicated Language
5. Business as a Second Language
6. Keep Talking And Nobody Explodes
7. Selecting the next session's topic
8. Wrap-up and take-away

**1. What is Verbal Communication?**

The tone of voice we use, our choice of words, how loudly or softly we speak all make up the package of **verbal communication**. They are combined with things like body language and facial expression (non-verbal communication) whenever we communicate with others in-person.

1. What would indicate that someone has good verbal communication skills? _____

2. What forms of communication involve only verbal communication? _____

2. Activity: What a Bunch of Baloney

Work together to write step-by-step instructions for making a baloney sandwich on the cue cards provided. Hang them on a wall in the order the instructions are meant to be followed.

It's your facilitator's job to make that sandwich, so guide them well!



1. What went well? _____

2. What would you change if you did this activity again? _____

3. Registers of Language

If you change the way you speak depending on the situation, you're changing what's called your register of language. The two we're going to look at today are:

-
- May sound "proper"
 - Full sentences
 - Professional sounding words
 - Polite and calm

-
- Casual tone
 - Fewer rules
 - Contractions and slang
 - Reflects more emotion

When might this be the best register of language to use?

When might this be the best register of language to use?

There's a time and place where each is acceptable: "when in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Consider what you're telling people with your register of language. People can make judgements based on how you speak – whether it's formally, or informally. Your words and tone subtly tell a story about who you are, and choosing your tone means you get to be in charge of that story.

If you were in a group of people who only speak casually and you communicate with them using just a formal register, what assumptions might they make about you?

If you were in a more professional setting where a formal register is expected, and you communicate very casually, what assumptions might they make about you?

Would you be more likely to use a formal or informal register in each of the following situations?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Ordering a coffee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Meeting your girlfriend or boyfriends' boss |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Giving a stranger directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Applying for a car loan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Attending a job interview |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Talking to a friend about your day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Asking a parent or grandparent for a favour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal | Teaching someone the rules of a game |



How would you say each of the following things using an informal register, and a formal register?

Ask for a refill on a cup of coffee:

Formal: _____

Informal: _____

Tell someone not to talk:

Formal: _____

Informal: _____

Apologize for being late:

Formal: _____

Informal: _____

Introduce yourself:

Formal: _____

Informal: _____

Ask someone to contact you:

Formal: _____

Informal: _____

4. Simplifying Complicated Language

There can be some very complicated ways of saying simple things. What happens if the words people choose to use are unnecessarily overly complicated? Rewrite the following phrases more clearly:



1. In the event of an unanticipated security alarm, all exterior doors will be remotely secured until such time as the alarm has been fully investigated and its validity is determined.

Clear: _____

2. Participants of the Province of Ontario's Transportation Review Committee are requested to review the minutes of the inaugural meeting as provided by the Committee Secretary. Please ensure full comprehension of the contents in advance of the next meeting, scheduled for July 21 commencing at 7:00 pm.

Clear: _____

3. Compensation is reflective of an employee's job proficiency, quantifiable client feedback, and their tenure.

Clear: _____

4. If the language used in oral communication is challenging to comprehend, the intended audience may be unable to grasp its primary meaning. Experts recommend not subscribing to the use of complex linguistics so as to avoid losing the discussions significance altogether.

Clear: _____

5. Business as a Second Language

There are some very common workplace sayings that aren't exactly overcomplicated in terms of language, but may still be a challenge to understand. They're usually much wordier ways of saying things that they need to be, but they may also be used to avoid saying something that might be considered too direct. Review the handout "Breaking through buzzwords" for some examples.



**“Let’s not
bale the
ocean on
this one...”**

Question: What other buzzwords have you heard?

Buzzword

What does it actually mean?

6. Keep Talking And Nobody Explodes

In this game, one person will take on the role of the Bomb Defuser, and they need to disarm a bomb before it explodes. Luckily for them, a team of Experts will be helping, providing instructions to disarm the bomb from their “Bomb Defusal Manual.”

Note: If you don’t take on the role of an Expert or Defuser in the first game, be sure to watch carefully and make notes about what you saw. Your facilitator will have some questions for you... and you may become an Expert or Defuser in the next game!

Notes: _____

Question: What was the hardest part of this game? _____

What would make that difficult task easier? _____

Did hearing the timer made it harder? Why or why not? _____



Verbal communication can be challenging, but when you’re under pressure and time is short, you need to pick your words wisely. Practice making clear, concise word choices no matter what the situation.

7. Selecting the next session's topic

We will be discussing another skill from the list during our next session. Each of these skills can be developed and practiced in a gaming environment, and are important not only in games, but in a non-gaming environment.

1. Verbal communication
2. Non-verbal communication
3. Observation skills
4. Decision making
5. Problem solving
6. Teamwork
7. Flexibility and adaptability
8. Work ethic
9. Conflict resolution
10. Resiliency



Which skill should we look at next? Participate in the poll to let your workshop facilitator know.

8. Wrap-up and take-away

One of the topics we discussed in this module was registers of language. Before our next session, think about one phrase or word that you know would be considered “informal register” and turn it into an equivalent formal language word or phrase. Your facilitator will be asking about this at the start of the next session.

My word or phrase: _____

A way of saying the same thing using formal language: _____

Reminder: record the date and time of our next session below.

The next session is: _____ at _____.