

# **Training Program on Personality Development & Leadership Skills**



**By**

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**To the**

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Communication Skills  
Program Content

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## **Active Listening & Communicating Assertively While Presenting**

### **Training Overview**

Effective communication is the cornerstone of successful presentations. This session focuses on two essential skills:

1. Active Listening – Listening with the intent to understand and engage fully.
2. Communicating Assertively – Expressing thoughts and ideas clearly, confidently, and respectfully during presentations.

### **1. Active Listening**

Active listening is about fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and remembering what is being said. It's a vital skill for creating a meaningful connection with your audience and addressing their needs.

#### **Key Components of Active Listening:**

##### **Pay Attention:**

Focus on the speaker without distractions.

Show you are listening through non-verbal cues (nodding, eye contact).

Avoid interrupting or finishing the speaker's sentences.

##### **Acknowledge Understanding:**

Use verbal affirmations like "I see," "That makes sense," or "Go on" to show engagement.

Summarize or paraphrase what the speaker says: "If I understand correctly, you're saying..."

Ask clarifying questions if needed: "Could you explain a bit more about...?"

##### **Provide Feedback:**

Respond thoughtfully to what the speaker has said.

Use open-ended questions to encourage further dialogue: "What do you think about...?"

Offer observations or insights related to the speaker's point of view.

**Defer Judgment:**

Listen fully before formulating a response.

Don't jump to conclusions or assume the speaker's intention.

Keep an open mind and avoid interrupting with premature feedback.

**Exercise: Active Listening Practice**

Pair up with a partner and take turns being the speaker and listener:

**Speaker:** Talk for 2 minutes about a topic of your choice.

**Listener:** Practice active listening by focusing on the speaker, summarizing key points, and asking clarifying questions.

After the exercise, discuss how active listening improved the conversation and understanding.

**2. Communicating Assertively While Presenting**

Assertive communication is about expressing yourself in a clear, respectful, and confident manner, especially when delivering a presentation. It involves striking a balance between being too passive and too aggressive.

**Characteristics of Assertive Communication:****Clarity:**

- Clearly state your message or opinion without ambiguity.
- Avoid using filler words (e.g., "um," "like," or "maybe"), which can weaken your message.

**Confidence:**

- Speak with a strong, steady voice.
- Use "I" statements to take ownership of your thoughts (e.g., "I believe," "I feel").
- Stand tall and use open body language to project confidence.

**Respect:**

- Respect your audience's perspectives and be open to questions or opposing views.
- Use polite but firm language when making your point.

- Avoid interrupting others and manage interruptions politely: "I'd like to finish my point, then I'll address your question."

### **Positivity:**

- Maintain a positive, solution-oriented attitude when discussing challenges.
- Frame feedback constructively and avoid negative language.

### **Assertive Phrases to Use While Presenting:**

- To start a point: "What I'd like to focus on today is..."
- To express an opinion: "In my view, this approach is effective because..."
- To offer feedback: "I understand your perspective, but I feel that..."
- To manage interruptions: "Let's come back to that question after I finish this section."
- To conclude a point: "In summary, what I'm suggesting is..."

### **Non-Verbal Assertiveness:**

- Posture: Stand tall, shoulders back, with both feet grounded.
- Eye Contact: Maintain steady eye contact with different sections of the audience.
- Gestures: Use open hand gestures to emphasize key points, but avoid crossing arms or fidgeting.
- Tone of Voice: Use a calm and steady tone to convey confidence and authority.

### **Exercise: Assertive Presentation Practice**

In small groups, take turns delivering a 2-minute presentation on any topic.

- Focus on communicating assertively by speaking clearly and confidently.
- Practice handling questions or interruptions with assertiveness.
- After each presentation, the group provides feedback on the clarity, confidence, and respectfulness of the speaker.

### **Combining Active Listening and Assertive Communication**

When you combine **active listening** with **assertive communication**, you:

- **Engage** with your audience by showing you value their input.
- **Adapt** your message based on audience feedback.
- **Address** questions and concerns in a respectful, confident way.
- **Maintain control** of the conversation or presentation flow.

## **Scenario Exercise: Handling Audience Questions Assertively**

Imagine you're giving a presentation, and a participant asks a challenging question:

**Step 1:** Actively listen to the question, showing that you understand their concern.

**Step 2:** Use assertive communication to respond clearly, stating your position without being defensive or dismissive.

Role-play this scenario with a partner and practice managing tough questions assertively.

## **Reflection: Personal Action Plan**

1. Active Listening:
  - How can you improve your listening skills in future presentations or meetings?
  - Write down one active listening technique you'll practice (e.g., summarizing key points).
2. Communicating Assertively:
  - In what situations do you find it difficult to communicate assertively?
  - Write down one assertive communication behavior to develop (e.g., using "I" statements or managing interruptions confidently).

## **Key Takeaways**

- Active listening helps you understand your audience and respond thoughtfully.
- Assertive communication ensures your message is heard, understood, and respected.
- Combining these two skills enhances your overall effectiveness as a presenter.

# Empathy & Interpersonal communication

## Training Overview

Effective interpersonal communication requires not only the ability to express yourself but also to understand others. This training focuses on two key skills:

1. **Empathy** – The ability to understand and share the feelings of others.
2. **Interpersonal Communication** – The process of exchanging information, thoughts, and feelings through verbal and non-verbal methods.

## 1. Empathy

Empathy is the foundation of meaningful human connection. It allows us to relate to others on an emotional level, understand their perspectives, and respond in a supportive manner.

### Key Components of Empathy:

1. **Emotional Recognition:**
  - Be aware of and acknowledge the emotions others are experiencing.
  - Use non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice to understand their feelings.
2. **Perspective-Taking:**
  - Imagine how the other person is feeling by putting yourself in their shoes.
  - Avoid making assumptions and focus on understanding their unique situation.
3. **Emotional Resonance:**
  - Feel a sense of connection with the emotions of others without becoming overwhelmed.
  - Share in their joy, frustration, or sadness appropriately, while remaining composed.
4. **Empathetic Response:**
  - Offer verbal and non-verbal cues that show understanding and support.
  - Reflect emotions back to the person: "It sounds like you're feeling..."
  - Ask open-ended questions to invite more sharing: "Can you tell me more about what's going on?"

### Empathy Statements:

- "It seems like you're going through a tough time right now."

- “I can see how that situation would be frustrating.”
- “I understand this must be difficult for you.”
- “It sounds like you’re feeling really excited about that!”

Exercise: Practicing Empathy

- Step 1: Pair up with a partner.
- Step 2: One partner shares a recent experience, while the other practices empathetic listening and responses.
- Step 3: Switch roles, and afterward, discuss how empathy influenced the conversation and emotional connection.

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## **2. Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication is the way we exchange messages with others, verbally and non-verbally. Mastering it can improve relationships, resolve conflicts, and enhance teamwork.

### **Key Components of Effective Interpersonal Communication:**

#### **1. Verbal Communication:**

- Be clear and direct with your words, avoiding ambiguity.
- Adapt your language to suit the context and the person you're speaking to.
- Avoid jargon or overly complex terms unless necessary for the audience.

#### **2. Non-Verbal Communication:**

- Body Language: Maintain an open posture, avoid crossing arms, and use gestures to emphasize points.
- Facial Expressions: Show appropriate emotions (smiling, nodding) to match the message.
- Eye Contact: Establish regular but natural eye contact to show attentiveness and confidence.
- Tone of Voice: Vary your tone to maintain engagement and express empathy or enthusiasm.

#### **3. Active Listening:**

- Listen attentively to fully understand the speaker’s message.
- Use techniques like paraphrasing and summarizing to demonstrate comprehension.
- Avoid interrupting or thinking about your response while the other person is speaking.

#### 4. **Feedback:**

- Offer constructive feedback in a respectful and positive manner.
- Focus on the behavior or message rather than making it personal: "I noticed that during the meeting, we could have discussed..."
- Use the "Sandwich Method" for feedback: positive comment – constructive feedback – positive comment.

### **Combining Empathy with Interpersonal Communication**

By integrating empathy into your interpersonal communication, you can:

- **Understand Others:** Get a clearer sense of what the other person is feeling and needing.
- **Build Trust:** People are more likely to open up and share when they feel understood.
- **Resolve Conflicts:** Empathy allows you to address the underlying emotions that drive disagreements.
- **Enhance Collaboration:** Teams that communicate empathetically are more cohesive and productive.

### **Empathy in Difficult Conversations**

When conversations are challenging or emotions are high, empathy can be crucial in de-escalating the situation:

1. **Listen Fully:** Allow the other person to express their thoughts and emotions without interruption.
2. **Acknowledge Feelings:** Use empathetic statements to validate their feelings before presenting your viewpoint.
3. **Stay Calm and Open:** Respond with understanding, even if you disagree.

Scenario Practice: Using Empathy in Conflict

Key Phrases for Empathetic and Effective Communication

- **To Express Understanding:**
  - ✓ "I understand how you're feeling."
  - ✓ "That must have been hard for you."
- **To Invite Dialogue:**
  - ✓ "Can you tell me more about how you're feeling?"
  - ✓ "What would help in this situation?"

- **To Share Your Perspective:**
    - ✓ "From my side, it seems like we need to..."
    - ✓ "I appreciate what you're saying, and here's how I see it..."
  - **To Offer Solutions:**
    - ✓ "Let's see if we can find a way to..."
    - ✓ "What if we try this approach?"
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## **Personal Action Plan**

### **1. Empathy:**

- ✓ Identify a relationship or situation where you can practice showing more empathy. Write down one action you'll take (e.g., listening without interrupting, validating feelings).

### **2. Interpersonal Communication:**

- ✓ Reflect on your communication style. Are there areas where you need to improve clarity or body language? Write down one behavior you'll work on (e.g., making more eye contact or practicing active listening).
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## **Key Takeaways**

- ✚ Empathy is about understanding and connecting with others on an emotional level.
- ✚ Effective interpersonal communication combines verbal clarity with strong non-verbal signals and active listening.
- ✚ When you communicate with empathy, you build trust, resolve conflicts, and foster better relationships.