



SCC Training
Briefing Notes
Module 6: Communication Skills



Introduction

The Safety Critical Communications training programme is modular. The full programme consists of **six** modules:

- Foundation
- Protocols 1 (ABC-P, Phonetic Alphabet, Numbers, Time)
- Structure and Lead Responsibility
- Protocols 2 (Standard Words and Phrases, Emergency Call, Equipment)
- Confirming Understanding (Repeat Back, Questioning)
- Communication Skills (Assertiveness, Challenging, Understanding Other's Needs)

For best results, please deliver the modules in order. It is especially important to deliver the **Foundation Module** first. However, you may want to prioritise one of the other modules if you are faced with a particular communication issue.

Timing

The module will take at least 45 minutes to deliver. The timings are as follows:

- Presentation Content: 16min
- Discussions and Questions (5): 25min
- Test Questions: 10min

Discussions

Do not skip the discussions. They are essential to the learning process. Without them, the content will just be a stream of meaningless words. It is important that attendees work through the issues themselves as well as listening to the briefing material.

Try and ensure that everyone participates in the discussions. You may need to balance 'loud' individuals with those more reluctant to speak. Bear in mind that the quiet, thoughtful person at the back of the room may have a valuable contribution to make.

Your input is welcome. Your specific experience and knowledge are relevant to the discussion. You may wish to guide the discussion and make it relevant to your particular area of the industry, though please don't detract from the minimum standard set by this training course.

Notes for each discussion are provided below in the Content Notes. Don't 'wade in' with your answers too early. Let the group make their own suggestions and perhaps argue with each other.



National Minimum Standard

The standard is composed of **Key Learning Points** which are highlighted throughout the module and again, in the summary at the end. There is nothing difficult or complex about the standard. It simply seeks to set a minimum level, above which we should all be operating.

The **Key Learning Points** for this module are:

1. **We need to develop a professional working relationship with our colleagues**
2. **We must be assertive. Not passive or aggressive**
3. **We must be prepared to challenge incorrect communication**
 - polite not rude
 - assertive not aggressive
 - question the content don't accuse the person
4. **We must consider other's needs – especially colleagues working under pressure**

The Test

The test is not designed to catch anyone out. It simply makes sure that attendees have understood the material. The questions are all based on the National Minimum Standard. As the Briefer, you will be responsible for delivering the questions, which are provided below.

Delivering the Presentation

The PowerPoint presentation contains voice-over and example communication recordings. You will therefore need to make sure that you can **deliver audio to the room** at a suitable volume.

Most of the content is voice-over driven and the **slides will auto-forward**. However, we have paused the auto-forwarding in certain places to allow you to facilitate a discussion, play an example, or check that attendees are happy with the content.



Slides which require you to press forward (space bar, forward arrow or left-mouse click) are marked with this icon in the bottom right-hand corner.

VO



Slides containing voice-over. Note, the voice over is **sometimes delayed** to allow learners to digest the contents of a slide before listening to it. **Be patient!**

...VO pause before VO VO... pause after the VO VO...VO pause between VOs

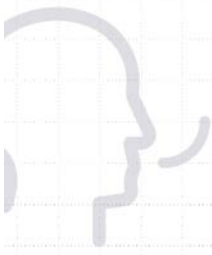

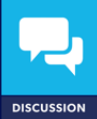



Content Notes



The following relate to specific content in the module. You may wish to have the module open

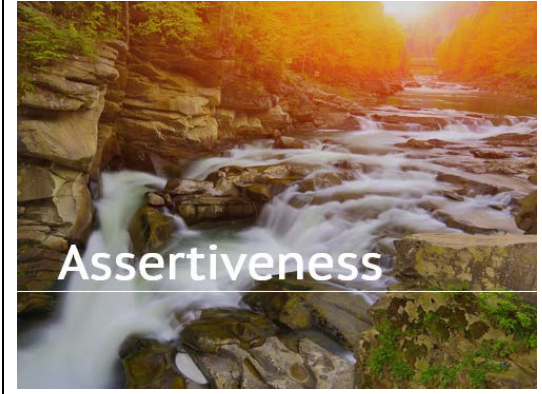
Page Reference	Notes
<p>Briefer's Introduction:</p> <hr/> <p>Welcome to the sixth module in our course on safety critical communications. Here we look at non-technical skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of the course to date• Working with Others• Assertiveness• Challenging• Considering Other's Needs	<p>The presentation has some notes at the beginning. These are for you, the Briefer, and not for attendees.</p>
	<p>This Welcome page is designed to sit on the screen while you take care of 'housekeeping' details such as fire exit and introductions.</p>
	



 <p>Module 6: Communication Skills</p>	<p>This slide introduces the course. The first few slides provide a recap of the course to-date, covering What is SCC? Contract Communications, ABC-P, Message Structure, Communication Barriers, and Active Listening.</p>
 <p>Communication Skills</p>	<p>This slide marks the start of the new material.</p>
 <p>Q. Which non-technical skills are you aware of ?</p>	<p>Communication Skills are closely related to other non-technical skills. We start this section with a discussion designed to engage any existing knowledge.</p> <p>Note, both Network Rail and RSB have produced non-technical skills frameworks. Depending on your audience, you will get different answers to this question, or perhaps a mixture of both.</p> <p>Don't get bogged down in detail – the purpose of this discussion is to activate any existing knowledge, not provide a rigorous definition of non-technical skills.</p>
 <p>Working with Others</p>	<p>This section looks at our relationships with our work colleagues.</p> <p>It arrives at the first of our Key Learning Points and also frames the following three sections on Assertiveness, Challenging, and Considering Other's Needs.</p>



		<p>This is the first of our four Key Learning Points.</p>
<p>We need to develop a professional working relationship with our colleagues</p>		






	<p>This section introduces the important subject of assertiveness.</p> <p>The section will look at what assertive and non-assertive behaviour looks like.</p> <p>We've purposefully made the non-assertive characters funny, to enliven the content and also reduce the impact that these characteristics can have in the workplace.</p> <p>This section is quite large because the topic needs to be explored using lots of practical examples.</p>
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<p>Decide which of these statements are Assertive and which are Aggressive.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="255 1209 510 1500"> <p>"I need to let a passenger train through before I can get you out onto the main line."</p> <p>"It doesn't matter why, I'm just not letting you go yet. OK."</p> <p>"Oh, aren't you the big boss. You know best, as usual"</p> <p>"OK. So if we schedule that for nineteen hundred hours, that will give you time to complete your current job and me time to..."</p> <p>"So, the reason you're in a hurry is..."</p> </td> <td data-bbox="510 1209 766 1500"> <p>"I don't believe that's the right thing to do - I can't agree to that"</p> <p>"[shouting] LISTEN TO ME, I NEED TO GET MOVING..."</p> <p>"I need..."</p> <p>"I didn't think you were the kind of guy to worry about petty regulations."</p> <p>"I can't give you permission to cross yet because..."</p> <p>"You're wrong, just like last time."</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>"I need to let a passenger train through before I can get you out onto the main line."</p> <p>"It doesn't matter why, I'm just not letting you go yet. OK."</p> <p>"Oh, aren't you the big boss. You know best, as usual"</p> <p>"OK. So if we schedule that for nineteen hundred hours, that will give you time to complete your current job and me time to..."</p> <p>"So, the reason you're in a hurry is..."</p>	<p>"I don't believe that's the right thing to do - I can't agree to that"</p> <p>"[shouting] LISTEN TO ME, I NEED TO GET MOVING..."</p> <p>"I need..."</p> <p>"I didn't think you were the kind of guy to worry about petty regulations."</p> <p>"I can't give you permission to cross yet because..."</p> <p>"You're wrong, just like last time."</p>	<p>Run this as a whole-class exercise. Get different attendees to decide whether a statement is aggressive or assertive.</p> <p>Don't be tempted to miss this exercise out. It's important that everyone can see the difference between these statements.</p> <p>The answers will be given on the next slide. Note, the following phrase is actually passive-aggressive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I didn't think you were the kind of guy to worry about petty regulations."
<p>"I need to let a passenger train through before I can get you out onto the main line."</p> <p>"It doesn't matter why, I'm just not letting you go yet. OK."</p> <p>"Oh, aren't you the big boss. You know best, as usual"</p> <p>"OK. So if we schedule that for nineteen hundred hours, that will give you time to complete your current job and me time to..."</p> <p>"So, the reason you're in a hurry is..."</p>	<p>"I don't believe that's the right thing to do - I can't agree to that"</p> <p>"[shouting] LISTEN TO ME, I NEED TO GET MOVING..."</p> <p>"I need..."</p> <p>"I didn't think you were the kind of guy to worry about petty regulations."</p> <p>"I can't give you permission to cross yet because..."</p> <p>"You're wrong, just like last time."</p>		



	<p>We must be assertive. Not passive or aggressive.</p>	<p>Our second Key Learning Point.</p>
	<p>This section focuses on effective challenging.</p> <p>A key concept here is to be respectful of authority but not frightened by it. We need to be prepared to challenge an incorrect communication (not a person) politely and assertively, if we genuinely believe it to be wrong.</p>	
	<p>Prepared to challenge incorrect communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • polite not rude • assertive not aggressive • question the content don't accuse the person 	<p>Our third Key Learning Point.</p>
	<p>The last section deals with Considering Other's needs when we're communicating with them.</p> <p>It details practical things we may need to do to communicate with fellow workers when they are under pressure.</p>	



  <p>What do you think the driver is thinking about?</p> <p>What do you think he is feeling?</p>	<p>This obvious example aims to</p>
 <p>KEY LEARNING</p> <p>We must consider other's needs, especially colleagues working under pressure</p> <p>Be prepared to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - talk more slowly - show more Lead Responsibility - offer emotional support - clarify information and actions - allow them more thinking-time 	<p>Our fourth Key Learning Point.</p>
 <p>Module Review</p>	<p>The review section works as per previous modules: you can run the review as an interactive question and answer session, with attendees providing the Key Learning Points.</p>
 <p>Module Conclusion</p>	<p>This section concludes the module and the entire course.</p>





Every time we hold an operational conversation, we are agreeing a contract

- keep the contract tight

Your briefer will now conduct a short test to confirm understanding.



M6 Test Questions

This module has presented the **Communication Skills** module of the course.

The National Minimum Standard requires that attendees understand the following Key Learning Points:

The **Key Learning Points** are:

1. **We need to develop a professional working relationship with our colleagues**
2. **We must be assertive. Not passive or aggressive**
3. **We must be prepared to challenge incorrect communication**
 - **polite not rude**
 - **assertive not aggressive**
 - **question the content don't accuse the person**
4. **We must consider other's needs – especially colleagues working under pressure**

Questions

The questions should be directed to **individuals** within the group, making sure that **each person answers at least one question**. If someone fails a question, allow the other group members to help them, and then ask them another.

It's best to ask the questions in order as some of them build on previous ones. It's also best to read out the answers in full as this forms part of the learning-reinforcement process.

1. **Q. We can think of front-line staff as one giant team, communicating with each other using the national minimum standard for safety critical communications. True or false?**
 - A. True. Even those who appear to work on their own will need to communicate with other industry workers at some point.

2. **Q. It is essential to be popular with our colleagues. We need to like them and they need to like us. True or false?**
 - A. False. We need to develop a professional working relationship with our colleagues. Liking each other is good, but not essential.



3. **Q. Assertive people tend to agree with everyone, making sure everyone is happy. True or false?**

A. False. Assertive people clearly state their needs whilst maintaining respect for others.

4. **Q. Shouting is usually a sign of self-confidence. True or false?**

A. False. People who shout a lot are often over compensating for their lack of self-confidence.

5. **Q. Name two characteristics of assertive behaviour, ie. how can we communicate in an assertive way? (you could ask this question again though you may need to give a few clues).**

A. Two of:

- State our needs clearly
- Avoid shouting
- Avoid sarcasm and mimicry
- Argue our point but be prepared to compromise
- Understand other's needs
- Criticise a point of view, not a person
- Use 'I' statements, rather than 'you' statements
- Be prepared to explain why we need something

6. **Q. Trying to please everyone and failing to state our own needs is a sign of what type of behaviour?**

A. Passive behaviour – trying to avoid any conflict by always agreeing with everyone.

7. **Q. Is the following statement assertive or aggressive?**

“I don't believe that's the right thing to do – I can't agree to that.”

A. It is an assertive statement, assuming you don't shout it at someone.



8. **Q. When challenging an error in a communication, we should focus on: a. the person who's made a mistake or b. the incorrect item?**
- A. b. the incorrect item – the wrong information or action. We should always question the content, not the person.
9. **Q. Spotting people who are under pressure: thinking about 'stuff' or having a strong emotional reaction, is a waste of our time. We should focus on the job. True or False?**
- A. False. It's important to be able to spot people working under 'thinking' or 'emotional' pressure, and deal with them accordingly.
10. **Q. Name two actions that we can take if we are dealing with someone under pressure.**
- A. Two of:
- Speak more slowly
 - Be prepared to repeat information and actions more often
 - Calm the other person by remaining calm yourself and showing understanding
 - Give them more thinking time
 - Resist the temptation to become agitated yourself
 - Cope with less structure in their communication (but keep yours correct)

