

## MODULE 1 • TRAINER PRESENTATION

# Communication

Speak clearly, check, listen and speak up: confident communication for your first job and everyday work in a new country.

8 hours

6 sessions

Ages 18-30

B1-B2 English

### SMILE

Support Young Migrants Integration in the Labour market  
in Europe

Erasmus+ KA220-YOU · 2024-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000256357



Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity

## HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

# Our agreement for this module



### Any English is good English

We listen to ideas,  
not grammar.  
Nobody corrects  
your language here.  
Mix words from  
other languages if it  
helps.



### Your story belongs to you

You never have to  
share your  
migration story. Our  
examples use  
invented characters.



### Listen to understand

One voice at a time.  
Every question is a  
good question.



### “Pass” is always OK

You can skip any  
activity or question.  
Take a break when  
you need one.

## MODULE MAP

# Six sessions, from first words to an action plan

**01**

## Introduction and foundations

Goals and why it matters.  
Icebreaker: "My communication story".

1 h

**02**

## Understanding communication challenges

Language barriers, cultural differences, professional norms. Group discussion.

1.5 h

**03**

## Verbal and non-verbal communication skills

Clear speaking, repair, handovers, body language. Role-play.

1.5 h

**04**

## Interpersonal skills and inclusive communication

Respectful interactions, active listening. Case study analysis.

1 h

**05**

## Practical strategies for workplace communication

Feedback, conflict, diverse teams, phone, email, chat. Simulations.

1.5 h

**06**

## Reflection and action planning

Self-assessment, personal action plan, closing discussion and feedback.

1.5 h

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

# By the end of this module, participants will be able to

- 1 Explain the role of communication skills in employment and workplace integration.
- 2 Identify common communication challenges related to language, culture and professional norms (expectations).
- 3 Understand the impact of effective communication on building inclusive and respectful work environments.
- 4 Apply practical strategies for clear and confident communication in work-related settings.
- 5 Demonstrate verbal, non-verbal and interpersonal communication skills (in practice) through role-play and real-life scenarios.
- 6 Reflect on their own communication strengths and areas for development in the workplace context (carry out a self-assessment).

## WHY THIS MATTERS

# Why communication matters for your start at work

**65** in 100

non-EU citizens aged 20-64 in the EU have a job. For nationals it is 77 in 100.

**+10** points

If refugees spoke the host language as well as natives, their employment rate would be about 10 percentage points higher.

**20** years

Refugees in the EU needed up to 20 years to reach the employment rate of people born in the country. A slow start is normal, not a personal failure.

**Language and communication grow with time and practice. This module is the practice part.**

Source: Eurostat Ifsa\_ergan, 2025 · European Commission & OECD, Working Paper 1/2016, 2014 data · European Commission & OECD, 2016, 2014 data

# 01

SESSION 1 • 1 h

## Introduction and foundations

Who we are, what we want to learn, and why communication is a key to work in a new country.

Welcome and goals

Why it matters

My communication story



Module 1 • Communication

6

## WELCOME AND SETTING OBJECTIVES

# Welcome: what do you want to say better at work?



### Our goal wall

- **In 8 hours** we practise real work situations: instructions, calls, feedback, handovers, group chats.
- **Your languages are a resource.** They help you learn, translate and connect.
- **Set one goal:** "At the end of this module, I want to be able to [my goal]."
- **We come back to it** in Session 6, in your action plan.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN WORKPLACE INTEGRATION

# Communication is part of every job

## 8 in 10



workers in Europe work in a team, and 74% deal with clients or customers at least sometimes.

## 50%



of employers call "empathy and active listening" a core skill. 47% say the same of customer service.

## 49%



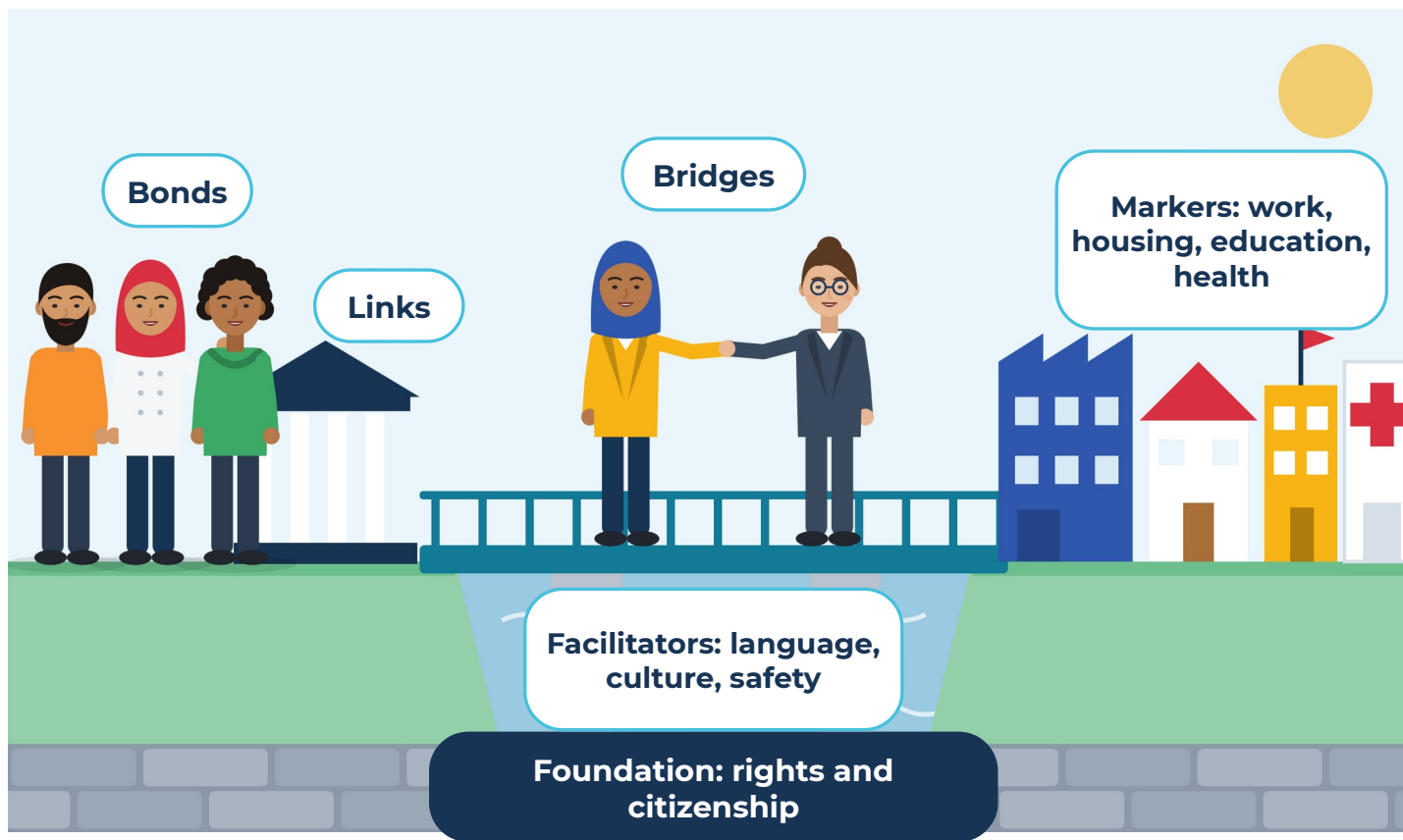
of workers say they themselves need to develop their social skills further. Everybody is still learning.

**Warehouse, café, care home or office: talking, listening and checking are in every job description.**

Source: Cedefop (2022), *Second European Skills and Jobs Survey (2021 data)*, pp. 55, 82 · World Economic Forum (2025), *Future of Jobs Report*, Fig. 3.3

## AGER AND STRANG: INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK

# Language is a bridge to work, people and services



### Four layers

- **Foundation:** rights and citizenship, the base for everything else.
- **Facilitators:** language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability. Language does not stand alone.
- **Social connection:** bonds (your own community), bridges (other groups), links (institutions such as the job centre).
- **Markers and means:** employment, housing, education, health: integration in daily life.

Source: Ager & Strang (2008), *Understanding integration: A conceptual framework*, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21(2), Figure 1

## ACTIVITY

# Icebreaker: "My communication story"

 **TIME**  
30 min

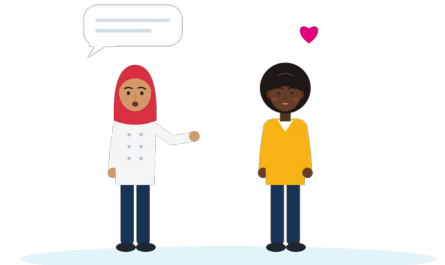
 **GROUP**  
Individual, then pairs, then whole group

 **MATERIALS**  
Four prompt cards, paper, pens, flipchart

 **GOAL**  
Collect what already helps you to be understood

## STEPS

1. Pick 2 of 4 prompt cards: a moment when communication worked well; a misunderstanding (any place); a word from my language I love; a person who helped me understand something.
2. Draw a simple timeline or make notes. Any language is fine. (5 min)
3. In pairs, share for 4 minutes each. Then introduce your partner to the group in one sentence. (15 min)
4. Together, collect "what helped" (asking again, gestures, a translation app) on a flipchart: our strategy bank. (10 min)



## DEBRIEF

- What helped you to be understood?
- What did the other person do that helped?
- Which of these strategies can you use at work?

# 02

SESSION 2 · 1.5 h

## Understanding communication challenges

Language, culture and unwritten rules at work: what makes communication harder, and what helps.

Language barriers

Cultural differences

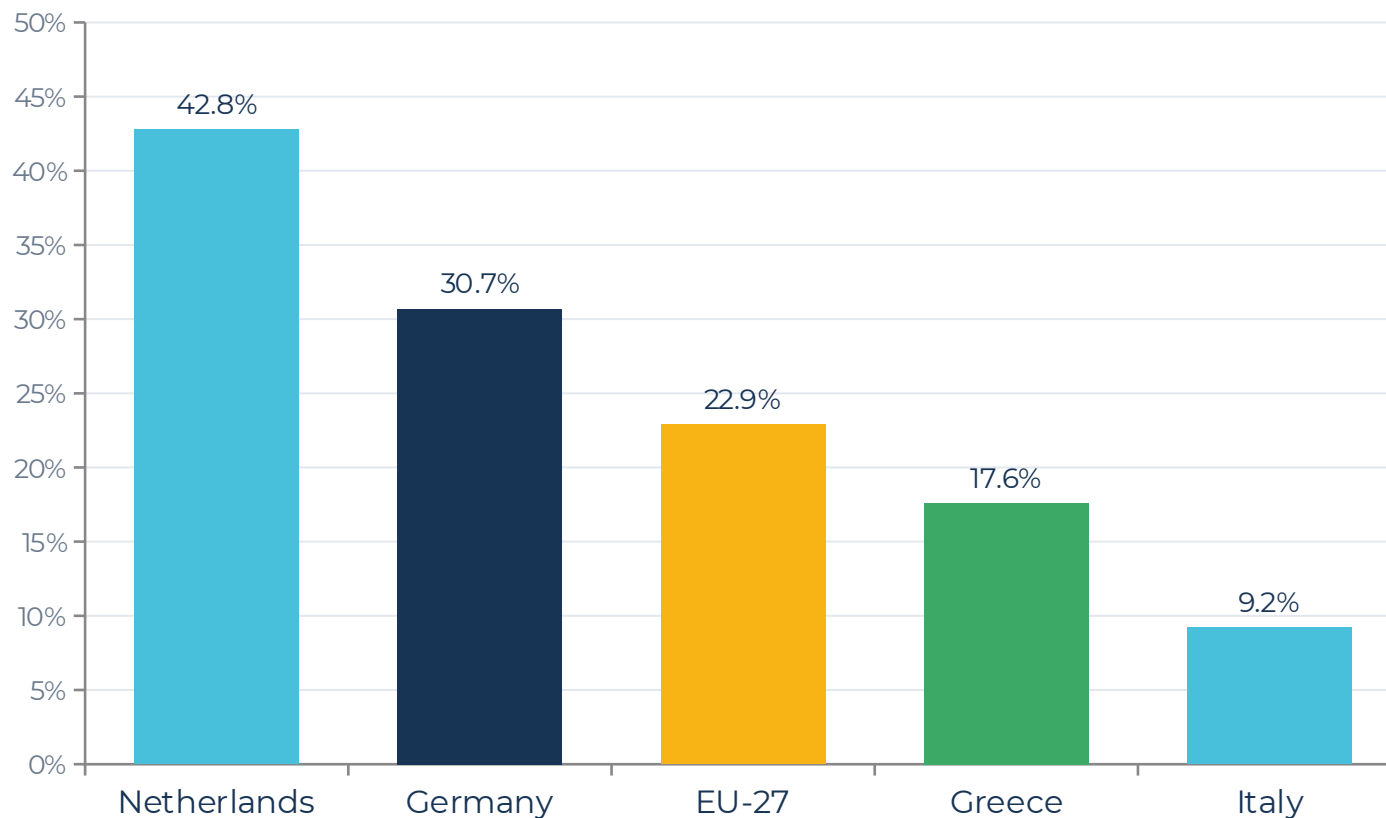
Professional norms

Group discussion



## LANGUAGE BARRIERS

# The obstacle people name most often: language



- **What the bars show:** non-EU-born people (15-74) who named an obstacle to a suitable job, and chose language.
- **Other obstacles in the EU:** recognition of qualifications 15.1%, no suitable job 14.6%, discrimination because of foreign origin 7.9%.
- **Italy:** 67% answered "other", so the Italian figure is hard to compare.

Source: Eurostat Ifso\_21obst01, EU Labour Force Survey 2021 ad hoc module; shares of people reporting an obstacle, own calculation in the SMILE research note

## DOCUMENTED PROGRAMMES: LANGUAGE COURSES AND WORK

# Language courses work best together with work

## 775,000

participations in Germany's job-related German courses, 2016-2022. Participants speak much better German than similar non-participants.

## +2 points

more people in insured employment four years after the course start. In the first years, course time slowed job entry.

## +8-9%

better Danish fluency for refugees with 100 extra hours of language class (Denmark).

**Learn while you work, and work while you learn. Language plus job practice is the strongest path.**

Source: Baderschneider et al. (2024; 2025), evaluation of the Berufssprachkurse, IZA Research Reports 142 and 149 · Foged & van der Werf (2023), Labour Economics 84

## MYTH OR FACT?

# Language and culture: common misunderstandings

✗ **"If my language is perfect, I will get the job."**

✓ Language is named most often, but recognition, discrimination and a lack of suitable jobs also block people. Language works best with work and qualification.

✗ **"Employers just can't understand my accent."**

✓ In a meta-analysis of hiring studies, accent bias ( $d = 0.47$ ) was not explained by how easy candidates were to understand. It is about the listener.

✗ **"Asking someone to repeat makes me look weak."**

✓ Asking for clarification is a competence at every language level. Handover tools exist because misunderstandings are normal for everyone.

✗ **"Learn the rules of 'the Germans' or 'the Dutch' and you avoid all problems."**

✓ A study of 67 countries found "more consensus than disagreement on value priorities across countries". People differ: observe and ask.

✗ **"Work first: the language will come by itself."**

✓ In Denmark, work-first led many men into precarious jobs with few hours and less language learning. Language plus work is better.

Source: Eurostat Ifso\_21obst01 (2021) · Spence et al. (2024), PSPB 50(3) · Council of Europe (2020), CEFR Companion Volume, p. 89 · Fischer & Schwartz (2011) · Arendt (2022)

## CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: HALL'S HIGH AND LOW CONTEXT

# The words are only the tip of the message

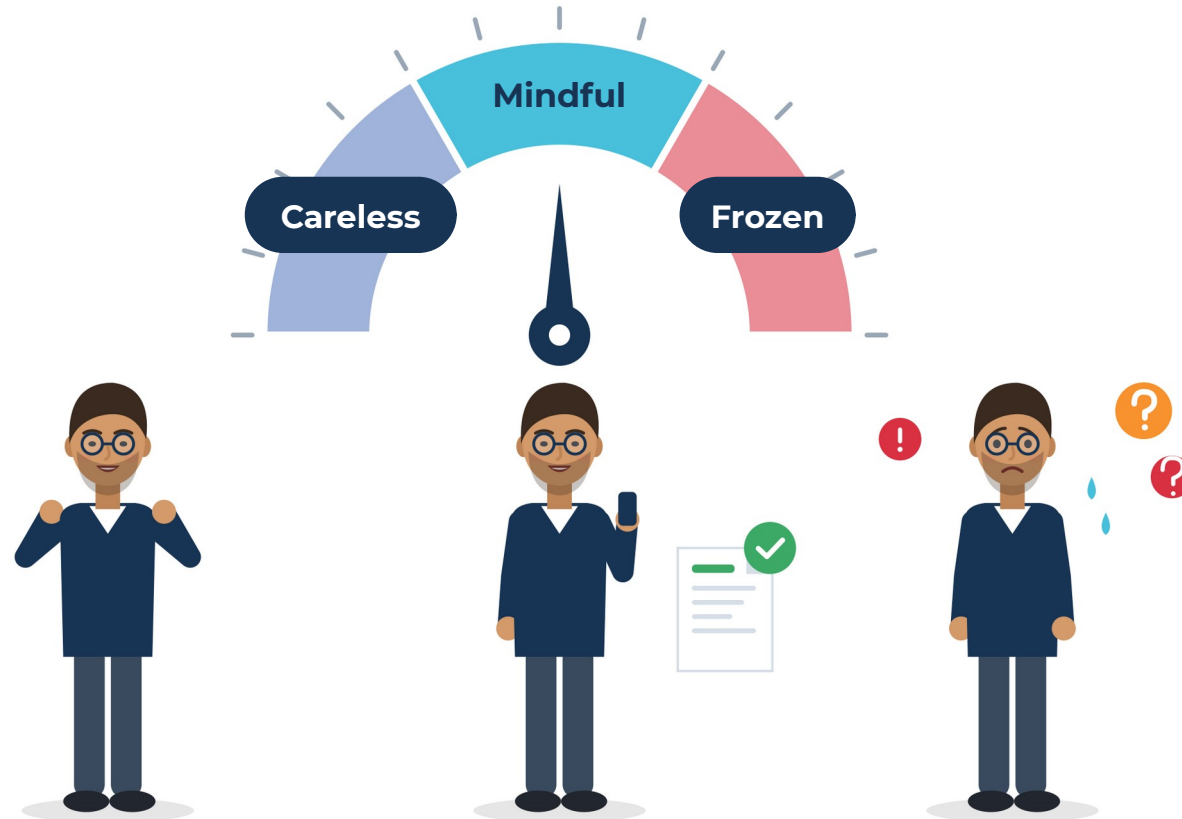


### A suggestion or an order?

- **Above the water:** the words.
- **Below the water:** the context.
- **Make it visible. Ask:** "Do you want me to do it now, before my break?"

## GUDYKUNST: ANXIETY AND UNCERTAINTY MANAGEMENT

# Nervous before a call? Aim for "just right"



### Anxiety and uncertainty

- **Too little: careless.** "No problem, I know everything." You do not prepare or check, and you miss details.
- **Just right: mindful.** A bit nervous, but curious. You prepare, listen and check: "Just to confirm, Monday at 6 a.m.?"
- **Too much: frozen.** "Will I make a fool of myself?" Your head goes empty, and you only nod.

Source: Gudykunst (2004), *Bridging Differences*, 4th ed. · Gudykunst (1998), *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 22(2) · core constructs only

## PROFESSIONAL NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS

# Unwritten rules at work: observe, mirror, ask



## Formal or informal "you"

Sie/du, u/jij, Lei/tu, siz/sen, Greek eseís/esý. Start formal, mirror the other person, accept an offer to switch.



## Greetings and small talk

Being greeted matters a lot to people. A short "How was your weekend?" builds bridges.



## Short, fast instructions

Jargon, noise and speed are normal in warehouses and kitchens. Checking is expected, not a weakness.



## Group chats and email

Many teams plan shifts in chats. Short replies can be misread: write clearly what you will do.



## Talking about pay and contracts

Asking about pay, hours and contracts politely, in writing and with dates is a normal work conversation.



## When unsure, ask

"Is there anything I should know about how things work here?" Rules differ between workplaces.

## ACTIVITY

# Group discussion: common challenges for young migrants

 **TIME**  
60 min **GROUP**  
Groups of 4, then gallery walk **MATERIALS**  
Flipchart paper, sticky notes  
in three colours, markers **GOAL**  
Name challenges, see what  
you can influence, find a first  
step**STEPS**

1. Build a "challenge wall" with three columns: Language, Culture and norms, System (contracts, recognition, bias).
2. Write challenges young migrants meet at work on sticky notes, one per note. Use examples of "people I know" if you prefer.
3. Mark each note: can I influence it? Yes, partly or no.
4. Choose one challenge. Write one first-step strategy and one person or service who could help.
5. Gallery walk: visit the other walls and add one idea to each.

**DEBRIEF**

- Which challenges can I influence? Which need employers or institutions?
- Which strategy from our strategy bank fits?
- Who can help?

# 03

SESSION 3 · 1.5 h

## Verbal and non-verbal communication skills

Say it clearly, check it, and let your body language support your words.

Clear speaking

Repair moves

Handovers

Body language



## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE VERBAL COMMUNICATION

# Six elements of clear speaking at work

### **Structure**

Main point first, then the details. One message at a time.

### **Key words and facts**

Names, numbers, times and places:  
"Room 12, at 14:00".

### **Pace and volume**

Slow down a little. Pause after key words. Keep a calm volume.

### **Match the other person**

Adjust formality and speed to them. If someone talks down to you: "Thanks, you can speak normally."

### **Check understanding**

Repeat back the key point, or ask the other person to do it.

### **Close the loop**

End with the next step: who does what, and by when.

Source: International Plain Language Federation, definition of plain language · Giles, Coupland & Coupland (1991), Communication Accommodation Theory

## ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

# Aisle 4 or dock 2?

**Bilal, 19**

First day in a warehouse near Rotterdam

Logistics

First day

Fast instruction

The team leader says quickly: "Grab the scanner, pick the B-list, drop the totes at dock two, and don't block the fire lane." Bilal nods and starts. Ten minutes later he is at the wrong place, and the team leader is annoyed.



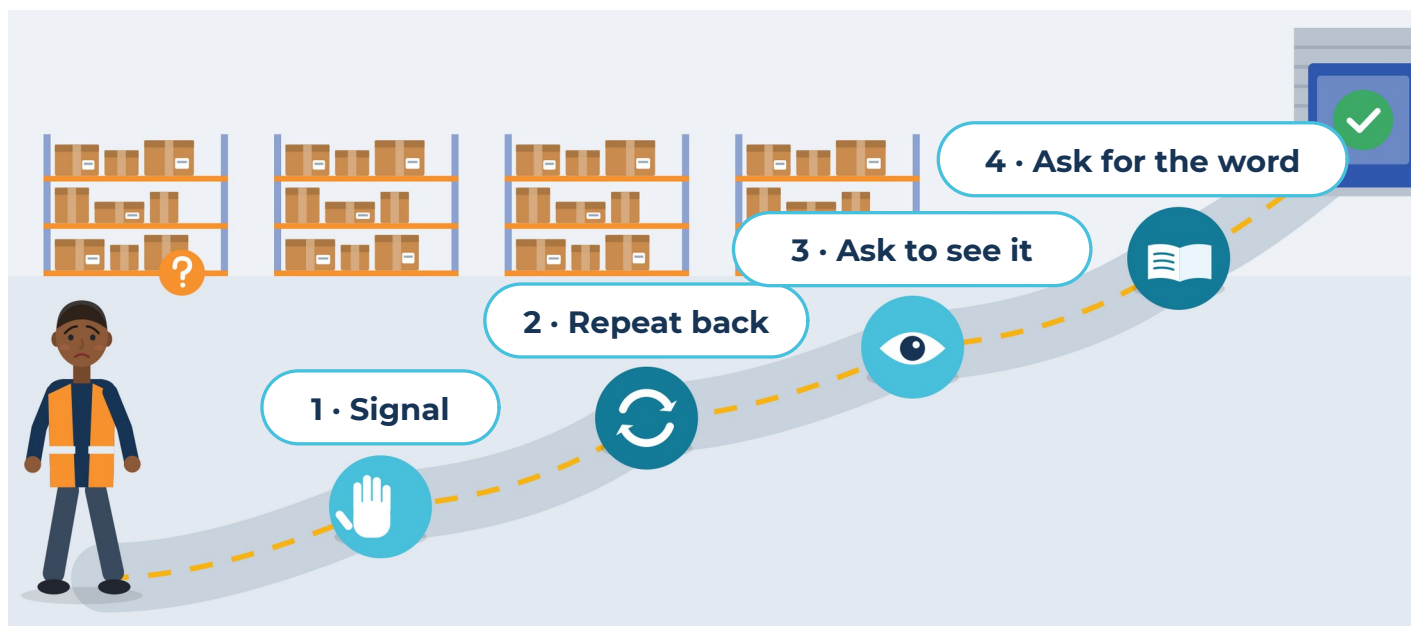
## DISCUSS

1. Why did Bilal nod?
2. What could he say in the first ten seconds?
3. What could the team leader do differently?

*Grounded in: 19% of immigrant workers vs 7% of native-born workers hold elementary jobs, with short spoken instructions (OECD/EC, Settling In 2023, p. 92).*

## WHEN YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND

# Four repair moves for the first day



## Say it like this

- **1 · Signal:** "Sorry, I didn't catch that. Could you say it again, a bit more slowly?"
- **2 · Repeat back:** "So: pallets from aisle 4 to dock 2, right?"
- **3 · Ask to see it:** "Could you show me once? Then I'll do the rest."
- **4 · Ask for the word:** "What does 'tote' mean here?" "What do you call this?"

*Everybody repairs, also native speakers. Asking is a skill, not a failure.*

Source: Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977) on repair · Council of Europe (2020), CEFR Companion Volume, p. 89 · Council of Europe (2018), RFCDC Vol. 1, p. 51

## USEFUL PHRASES

# Phrases for checking, phoning and first days

### Checking and repair

"Sorry, I didn't catch that.  
Could you say it again, a bit  
more slowly?"

"Just to check I understood:  
you want me to clean the  
cold room first, right?"

"Could you show me once?  
Then I'll do the rest."

### On the phone

"Good morning, my name is  
Amir Haddad. I'm calling  
about the job advert for a  
forklift assistant."

"Could you spell that for me,  
please?"

"Let me repeat the details:  
Monday, 6 a.m., at the main  
gate. Is that correct?"

### First days

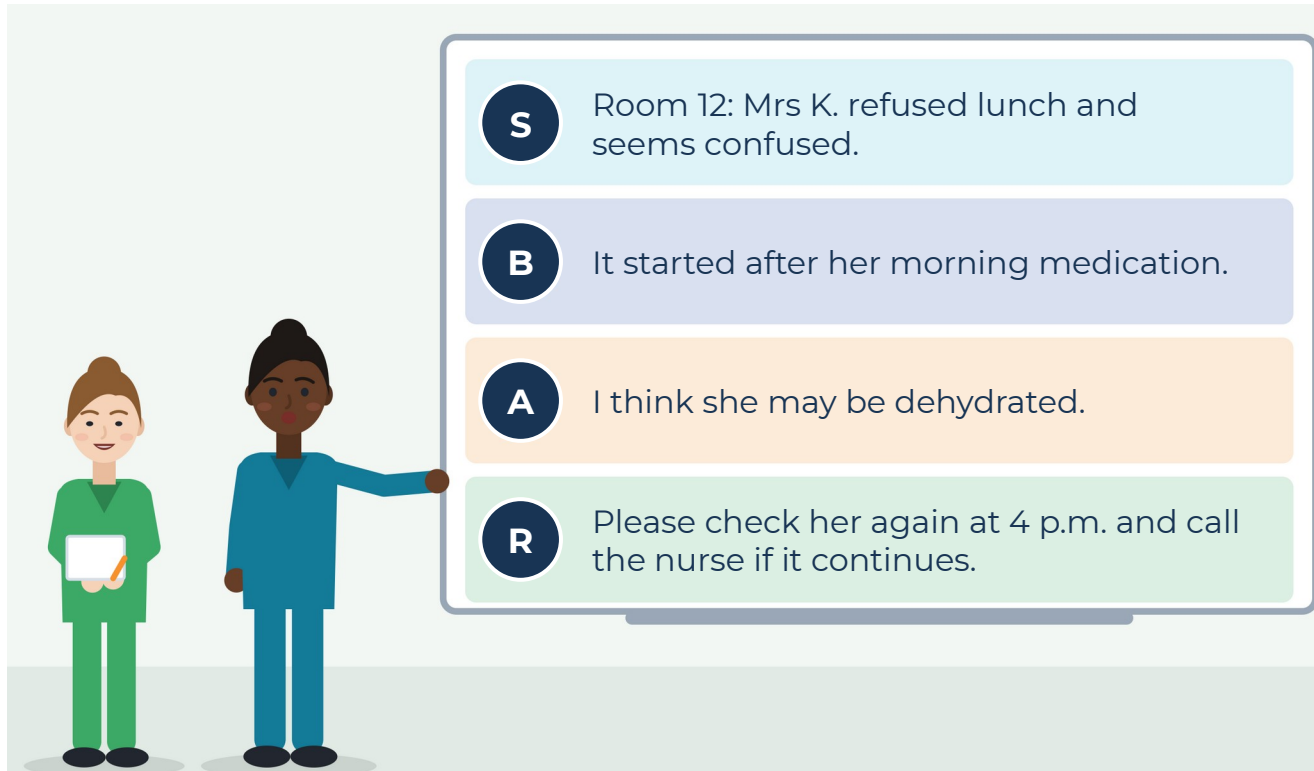
"Should I say Sie or du to  
you?"

"How was your weekend?"

"Is there anything I should  
know about how things work  
here?"

## STRUCTURED SPEAKING: THE SHIFT HANDOVER

# Shift handover in four boxes: SBAR



*On the board: a care-home handover. A fixed order lowers the language load.*

### Four boxes

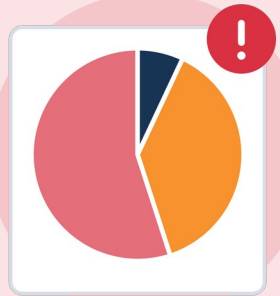
- **S • Situation:** what is happening now.
- **B • Background:** what is relevant.
- **A • Assessment:** what I think.
- **R • Recommendation:** what next.
- **In a warehouse:** "Dock 2: the truck is late. The driver called at 6:10. We will miss the 10:00 slot. Start loading order 5 first."

Source: Leonard, Graham & Bonacum (2004), *Quality & Safety in Health Care* · Müller et al. (2018), *BMJ Open* 8(8), systematic review of 11 studies

## NON-VERBAL CUES: A FAMOUS MYTH

# "93% is body language"? What the study really said

### The popular claim



- "Only 7% of communication is words, 38% is voice and 55% is the face."
- Seen on posters and in many trainings.
- It suggests that words hardly matter.

### What Mehrabian studied



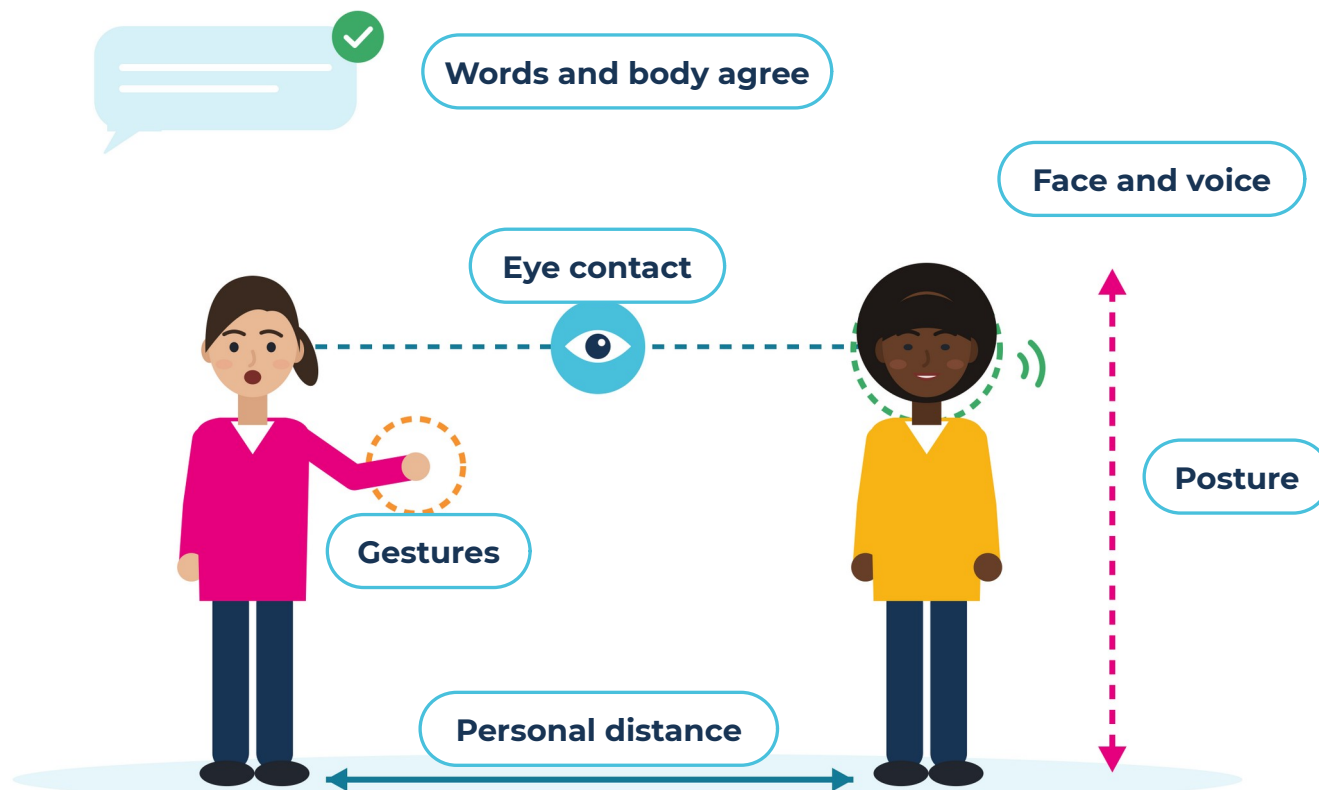
- Two small experiments in 1967: judging liking from single words.
- Words, voice and face sent mixed signals on purpose.
- Mehrabian: "Unless a communicator is talking about their feelings or attitudes, these equations are not applicable."

**At work, words matter. Let your face, voice and posture tell the same story as your words.**

Source: Mehrabian & Wiener (1967) · Mehrabian & Ferris (1967) · Mehrabian, [kaaj.com/psych/smorder.html](http://kaaj.com/psych/smorder.html) · Council of Europe (2018), RFCDC Vol. 1, p. 48

## NON-VERBAL CUES AND BODY LANGUAGE

# Body language: observe, do not assume



### Observe, then adjust

- **Eye contact:** what feels polite differs. Observe before you judge.
- **Distance:** differs with age and gender, not only country.
- **Gestures:** the same gesture can mean different things. Not sure? Ask.
- **Face and voice:** calm and friendly, also when your language is not perfect.
- **Posture:** open and calm: feet on the ground, hands visible, breathe.
- **Words and body agree:** people notice mixed signals. Make them say the same thing.

Source: Akechi et al. (2013), PLoS ONE · Sorokowska et al. (2017), JCCP 48(4) · Council of Europe (2018), RFCDC Vol. 1, p. 61 · ESCO skill "use body language"

## ACTIVITY

# Role-play: practising workplace conversations

 **TIME**  
60 min

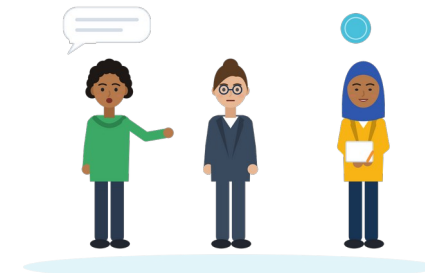
 **GROUP**  
Trios: speaker, partner,  
observer

 **MATERIALS**  
Scenario cards, phrase cards,  
observer checklist, time-out  
cards

 **GOAL**  
Practise greeting, checking,  
repeating back and closing in  
real work situations

## STEPS

1. Pick a scenario card: the first phone call (Amir), Aisle 4 or dock 2 (Bilal), the handover (Grace), "Tell me about yourself" (Hevin) or the café complaint (Mariam).
2. Prepare for 3 minutes. You may prepare in your strongest language.
3. Play for 4-5 minutes. The partner speaks fast once, so the speaker can use a repair move.
4. The observer ticks: greeting and formality, one repair move, a repeat-back, calm open body language, a clear closing.
5. Rotate roles so everyone plays the speaker once (about 12 minutes per round).



## DEBRIEF

- What did you do when you did not understand?
- How did your body language change when you were nervous?
- What will you say differently next time?

# 04

SESSION 4 • 1 h

## Interpersonal skills and inclusive communication

Respect, support and real listening: how good colleagues talk  
with each other.

Respectful interactions

Active listening

Case study



## BUILDING RESPECTFUL AND SUPPORTIVE INTERACTIONS

# Effective for you, appropriate for them



### Use names well

Learn names and how to say them. Ask: "How do you pronounce your name?"



### Choose a shared language

If someone does not understand, switch language or summarise for them.



### Give credit

Say who did the work: "Sara prepared the new shelf plan. Thanks, Sara."



### Ask before you judge

"What did you mean by that?" before you decide it was rude.



### Speak up as a bystander

If a "joke" hurts someone, a short "Not funny. Let's get back to work" helps.

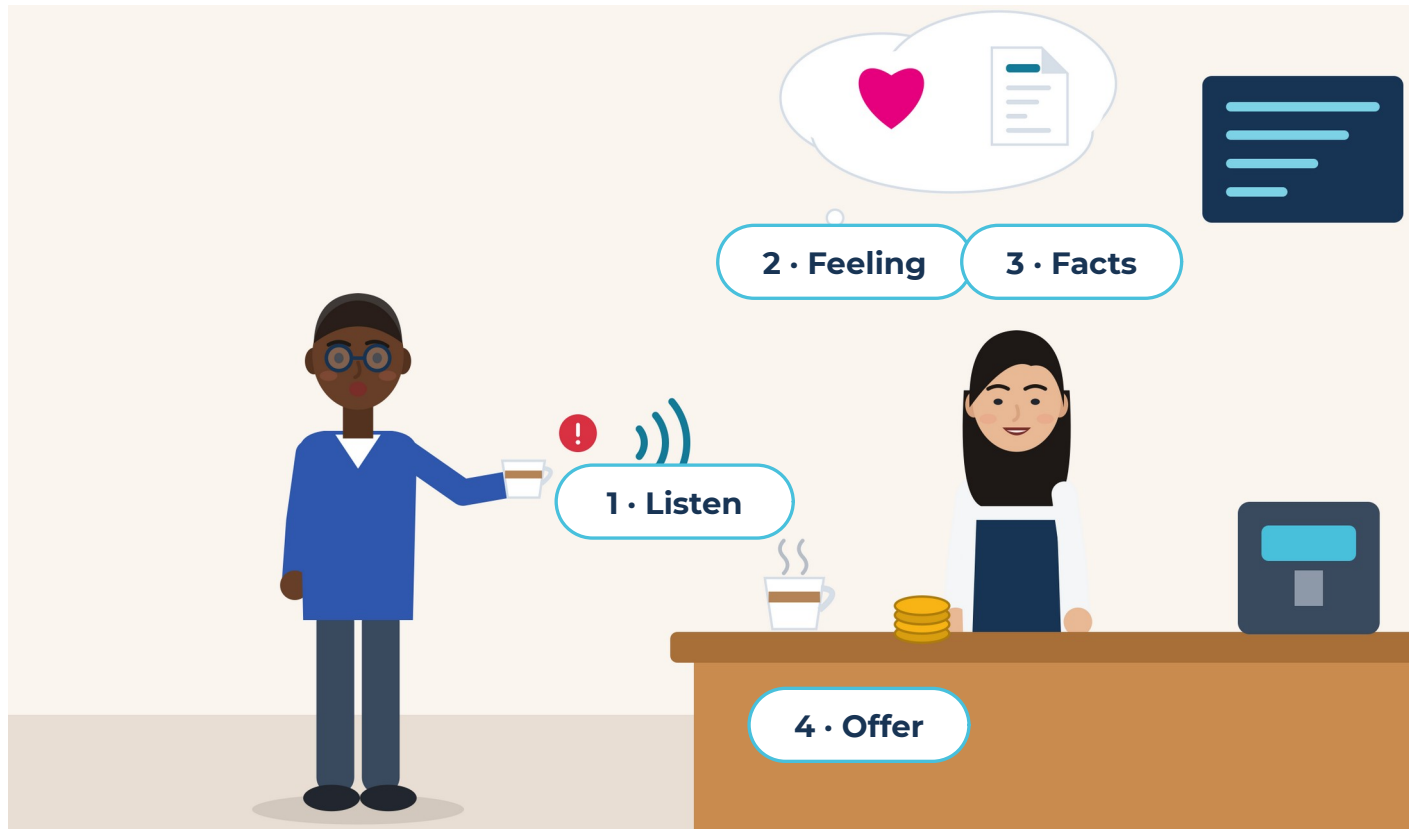


### Both sides adapt

Respect is not only the newcomer's job. Colleagues learn and adapt too.

## ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES

# Listen for the facts and the feeling



### Active listening

- **1 • Listen:** full attention. Notice words, voice, face and pauses.
- **2 • Reflect the feeling:** "I can see this is frustrating."
- **3 • Summarise the facts:** "So the order was wrong twice."
- **4 • Ask or offer:** "What would help now?" "Would you prefer a new coffee or a refund?"

## ACTIVE LISTENING WITH A CUSTOMER

# The second wrong order

**Customer** This is the second time my order is wrong! I asked for oat milk.



**Mariam** I'm sorry about that. So the order was wrong twice. I understand why you're upset.



**Customer** Yes. And I'm in a hurry.



**Mariam** Let me see what I can do. Would you prefer a new coffee right now, or a refund?



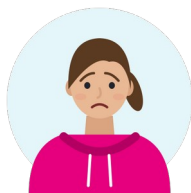
**Customer** A new one, quickly please.



Invented scenario: Mariam, 19, works in a café in Amsterdam; her Dutch is A2-B1. Listen, name the feeling, summarise, offer two options.

## ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

# "Say it again, with your accent!"

**Sara, 23**

Supermarket team in Greece

Retail

Greece

A "joke" that hurts

In team meetings, a colleague often repeats Sara's words with an exaggerated accent, "as a joke". Others laugh. Sara laughs too, but now she avoids speaking in meetings. Her ideas for the new shelf plan stay in her head.



## DISCUSS

1. What is said, and what is not said?
2. What could Sara say, and to whom?
3. What could a colleague who sees it do?
4. Where can Sara get support if it continues?

*Grounded in: 27% of Muslim respondents in 13 EU countries experienced racist harassment in five years; only 21% in Greece knew the national equality body (FRA, Being Muslim in the EU, 2024).*

## DOCUMENTED PRACTICE: ITALY'S SAI RECEPTION NETWORK

# Real practice: communication that opens work

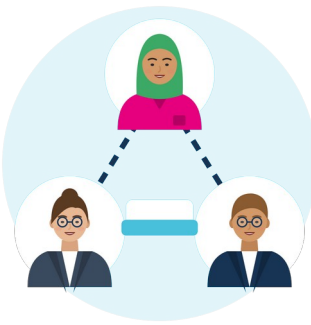
### Acireale



### "From Italian to Italian"

In Acireale, a mediator simplifies technical words in vocational courses, so trainees are not stopped by jargon.

### Rome



### Three-way talk in an internship

D., mother of a one-year-old, did a three-month internship as a hotel chambermaid in Rome. It led to a job.

### 2025



### The network in numbers

55,779 people supported in 2025. Of adults: 18.6% vocational training, 10.6% internship, 33.8% job placement.

Source: Servizio Centrale SAI, ANCI & Cittalia (2026), XXIV Rapporto annuale SAI, pp. 103, 105, 117 (programme statistics, no comparison group)

## ACTIVITY

# Case study analysis: what would respect look like?

 **TIME**  
45 min

 **GROUP**  
Groups of 3-4

 **MATERIALS**  
Case study texts (Sara, Fatou, the SAI Rome case), flipchart

 **GOAL**  
Find respectful, supportive words for every person in the case

## STEPS

1. Each group gets one case: Sara and the accent "jokes" (invented), Fatou is "too quiet" (invented) or the SAI Rome internship (real).
2. Answer: Who is affected? What is said, and what is not said?
3. Write what respectful, supportive communication would sound like for each person, including bystanders.
4. Use active listening: how would you reflect the feeling and summarise the facts?
5. Present in 2 minutes. Add your best sentences to a "team charter" on the flipchart.



## DEBRIEF

- What does a supportive colleague do in this case?
- What can a bystander say?
- Which listening technique helped?

# 05

SESSION 5 · 1.5 h

## Practical strategies for workplace communication

Feedback, conflict, diverse teams and the channels we use every day: phone, email and group chats.

Feedback

Conflict

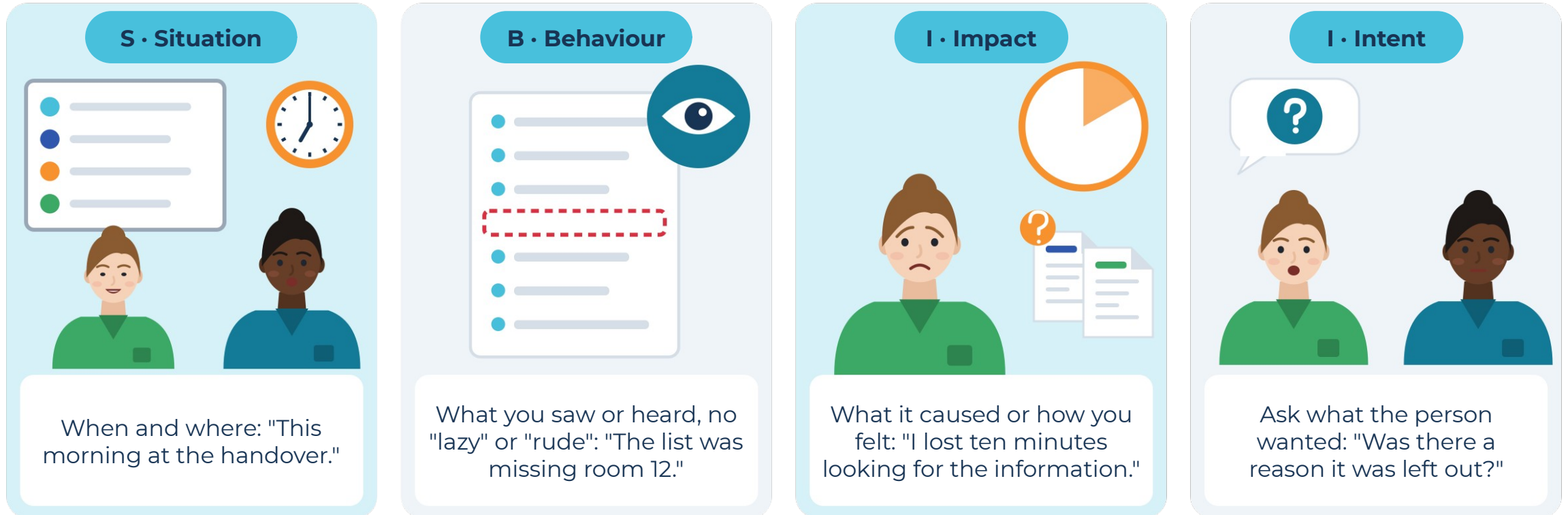
Diverse teams

Simulation



## FEEDBACK: CRITICISM AND APPRECIATION

# Feedback with SBI: situation, behaviour, impact



Appreciation works the same way: "Yesterday, when the truck came late, you stayed to help me unload. We finished on time. Thank you."

Source: Center for Creative Leadership, Situation-Behaviour-Impact (SBI) and SBII (Intent) feedback model, web article checked 1 October 2026

## GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

# From judgement to clear, fair feedback

### INSTEAD OF

*"You are lazy."*

*"That was not professional."*

*"Your handover is always bad."*

*Silence, and then quitting.*

*"Good job."*

### TRY

**"The lunch dishes were still in the sink at 3 p.m. Can we agree who does them?"**

**"Could you tell me which situation you mean, so I can do it better?"**

**"At today's handover, room 12 was missing. I lost ten minutes."**

**"I'd like to talk about something that's important for me."**

**"You showed me the new machine slowly, once. Now I can do it alone. Thanks."**

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: THOMAS-KILMANN

# Five ways to handle conflict: choose, do not default



### Choose the mode

- **Competing:** "We do it my way." Needed when safety is at risk. Costly in everyday team life.
- **Collaborating:** "Let's find a solution that works for both." Worth it when a problem repeats.
- **Compromising:** "Let's meet halfway." Fast, and both give something.
- **Avoiding:** "Let's leave it." Wise for a short, unimportant disagreement. Harmful if problems grow.
- **Accommodating:** "OK, as you wish." Builds goodwill. Harmful if it means unpaid hours or harassment.
- **Newcomers often avoid or accommodate.** Choose, do not default: what do I risk?

Source: Kilmann & Thomas (1977), Educational and Psychological Measurement 37(2) · assertiveness × cooperativeness diagram after Thomas

## ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

# Direct or rude?

**Kemal, 22**

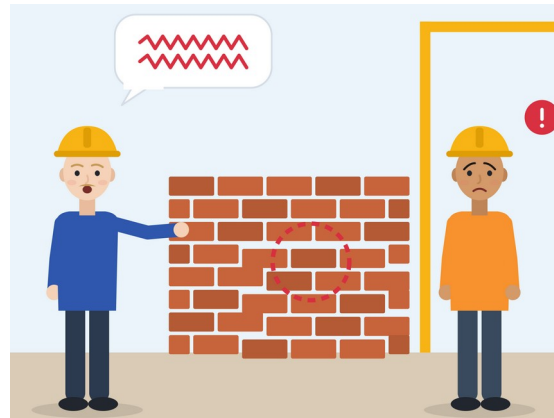
New in a construction team in the Netherlands

Construction

Diverse team

Feedback style

Pieter, an experienced bricklayer, says: "This wall is wrong, do it again." Kemal hears an insult in front of everyone. Pieter thinks he was only being clear and fast. After that day, Kemal stops asking questions, and small mistakes become bigger.



## DISCUSS

1. What did Pieter mean? What did Kemal hear?
2. How could Kemal raise it, using SBI?
3. Which conflict mode fits here?
4. What team rule could help both of them?

*Grounded in: across 67 countries there is "more consensus than disagreement on value priorities across countries" (Fischer & Schwartz, 2011). This is about two people's styles, not two nations.*

## PHONE, EMAIL AND GROUP CHATS

# Phone, email or group chat: which one, and how?

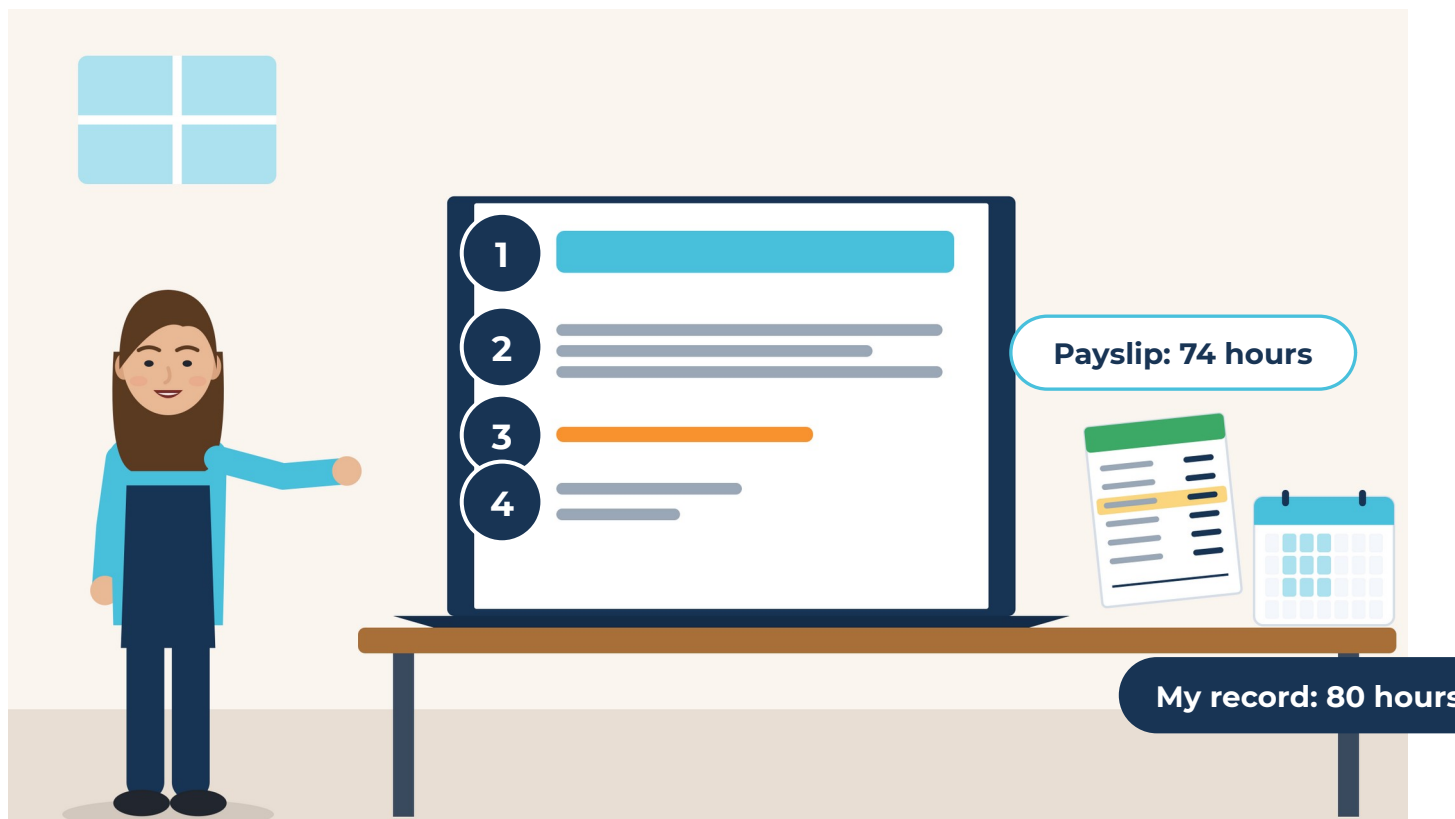
|                                                                                    | Channel                        | Good for                                                          | How to do it well                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | <b>Phone call</b>              | Urgent things, being late or sick, first contact with an employer | Prepare 3 sentences and the job reference. Repeat details back. Ask people to spell names. |
|   | <b>Email</b>                   | Pay, hours, contracts, anything you may need to show later        | Clear subject, one request, dates and numbers, polite start and end. Keep a copy.          |
|   | <b>Team group chat</b>         | Shift swaps and quick updates for everyone                        | Write the full answer, not only an emoji: "I can cover Saturday, 8 to 16."                 |
|  | <b>Private talk or message</b> | Feedback, conflict, personal topics                               | Move sensitive topics out of the group: "Can we talk privately for a moment?"              |

**Omar answered "Who can cover Saturday?" with a thumbs-up. He meant "I saw it". He was put on the rota.**

Source: Cedefop (2022), ESJS 2021, p. 23 · ESCO skill "use online conventions of netiquette" · Council of Europe (2020), CEFR Companion Volume, p. 81

## TALKING ABOUT PAY: A NORMAL WORK CONVERSATION

# Six hours missing on the payslip: write it clearly



### Lina, 22, bakery in Germany

- **1 • Subject:** "Question about my payslip, March 2026".
- **2 • Facts:** "My payslip shows 74 hours, but I worked 80 hours (see the dates below)."
- **3 • One request:** "Could you please check it?"
- **4 • Polite close:** "Thank you. Kind regards, Lina." Keep a copy and your own record of hours.
- **Not an attack:** a question with dates. In Germany, employers must give a pay statement in text form with every payment.

Source: Gewerbeordnung § 108 (Germany) · FRA (2019), Protecting migrant workers from exploitation: workers' perspectives, pp. 16, 20 · invented scenario

## ACTIVITY

# Simulation exercises: four stations



**TIME**  
70 min



### GROUP

Four groups rotate, about 12 min per station



### MATERIALS

Role cards, phrase cards, timer, sample chat and payslip printouts



### GOAL

Use a structure (SBI, conflict modes, SBAR, plain language) under light pressure

## STEPS

1. Station A, feedback: Yusuf hears "That was not professional." He asks for the situation and behaviour; the supervisor repeats it with SBI.
2. Station B, conflict in a diverse team: Pieter and Kemal. Choose a conflict mode and explain why.
3. Station C, handover: Grace gives an SBAR handover in under one minute. The listener reads back the key point.
4. Station D, chat and email: rewrite Omar's thumbs-up and Lina's payslip email in plain language.
5. Each station has a role card, a phrase card and a one-line success criterion. Everyone plays the supervisor once.



## DEBRIEF

- Which tool felt most useful?
- When is avoiding OK, and when not?
- What changed when you used a structure?

# 06

SESSION 6 • 1.5 h

## Reflection and action planning

Look at your strengths, choose one goal, and plan the next four weeks.

Self-assessment

Action plan

Closing discussion



## SELF-CHECK

# Self-assessment: my communication at work

|                                                                           | Not yet                  | Sometimes                | Usually                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I ask someone to clarify or repeat when I do not understand.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can use the phone for work, asking for clarification when needed.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can explain a task or a problem in a clear order.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My body language is calm and fits my words, also when I am nervous.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I listen for the feeling and the facts, and I summarise.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can ask for feedback, and give it with situation, behaviour and impact. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can express disagreement respectfully.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## SELF-CHECK

# Employment-focused communication checklist

|                                                                 | Not yet                  | Almost                   | Yes                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I can introduce myself in 60 seconds.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have three repair phrases ready.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I know how to confirm instructions.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can write a short, clear work email.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I know my rights documents (contract, payslip) and whom to ask. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I know my local equality body or advice centre.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have one mentor or "bridge" person.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## BE FAIR TO YOURSELF

# Skills open doors, but they are not the whole story

### What this skill can change



- Ask, check and repeat back, so fewer mistakes happen.
- Explain your experience clearly in interviews and at work.
- Give and take feedback, and handle conflict calmly.
- Build bridges: colleagues, mentors, advisers.

### What it cannot fix alone



- Identical CV, different name: 55 of 100 got a positive answer with a Dutch name, 40 of 100 with a Turkish name.
- Recognition of diplomas, residence permits and the right to work depend on laws and offices, not on you.
- Discrimination is not your fault. It can be reported to an equality body, a union or an NGO.

**Train your skills AND know your rights. Both are part of a fair start.**

Source: Thijssen et al., 2021, JEMS (correspondence test, NL, applicants aged 23-25)

## FREE EUROPEAN TOOLS

# Name your communication skills in EU words



### EU Skills Profile Tool

Describe your skills and experience in your language and English side by side. Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Turkish, Ukrainian and more.



### Europass

Free CV editor and profile in 31 languages. Use it to turn your skills profile into a CV.



### ESCO skill names

Use the EU's own words for soft skills, e.g. “collaborating in teams and networks”, on your CV.



### ENIC-NARIC

National centres that compare and recognise foreign diplomas. Refugees can be assessed even with missing papers.

## INTERVIEWS: TELLING YOUR STORY

# "Tell me about yourself": a 60-second answer

**Interviewer** Tell me about yourself.



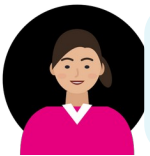
**Hevin** I'm a trained nursing assistant, and I'm improving my German to B2. Before, I worked two years in a textile workshop.



**Interviewer** I see a gap in your CV. What did you do in the last year?



**Hevin** I focused on German and finished B1. I volunteer at a care home twice a week. Now I'm ready to start in care.



Invented scenario: Hevin, 26, Germany. Present, past, future. Show what you are doing now: courses, volunteering, certificates.

## CREATING A PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

# My communication plan for the next four weeks



### Five steps up

- **1 • One goal:** "I ask my team leader for feedback every Friday."
- **2 • One situation:** when and where will I practise it?
- **3 • One bridge person:** a colleague, mentor or adviser who can help me.
- **4 • One resource:** a course, an app, a phrase card, a help point.
- **5 • How I will know:** what will be different in four weeks?

*In pairs, read your plan to a partner. The partner asks one question to make it clearer.*

Source: SMILE research note, communication, §8 · Ager & Strang (2008), social bridges

## WHERE TO GET HELP

# Where to go when it is not OK

|                                                                                    | Country            | Equality body (discrimination)                              | Know it | Unfair pay or work                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------|
|   | <b>Türkiye</b>     | TİHEK, Human Rights and Equality Institution (tihek.gov.tr) | no data | Ministry of Labour (csgb.gov.tr),<br>YİMER 157 helpline |
|   | <b>Greece</b>      | Greek Ombudsman                                             | 21%     | Labour Inspectorate, phone 1555                         |
|   | <b>Italy</b>       | UNAR, National Office against Racial Discrimination         | 17%     | Ispettorato Nazionale del Lavoro                        |
|   | <b>Germany</b>     | Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes                       | 20%     | Faire Integration (free, multilingual)                  |
|  | <b>Netherlands</b> | College voor de Rechten van de Mens                         | 39%     | Nederlandse Arbeidsinspectie,<br>Juridisch Loket        |

**Only 6% of people who felt discriminated against reported it. Knowing where to go is part of speaking up.**

Source: FRA (2024), *Being Muslim in the EU*, pp. 18, 126-127 ("Know it" = awareness among Muslim respondents, 2022) · official websites (SMILE research notes)

## REFLECTION

# Closing discussion: what do I take with me?

**What will I do differently at work from tomorrow?**

**Who is my bridge person?**

**Which strategy from our strategy bank will I use first?**

**What feedback do I have for this module?**



*One word or one sentence each. "Pass" is always OK.*



## KEY MESSAGES

# Ask. Check. Listen. Speak up.

Clear communication is a skill you can practise. Asking is part of competence, not a weakness. Your accent and your languages are part of who you are. When something is not OK, you have words, rights and people who can help.



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# Thank you

Questions, ideas, stories: the floor is yours.

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**1 • Communication**

**PROJECT**

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## SKILLS = Opportunity

Empowerment Through Skills · Inclusion Through Opportunity