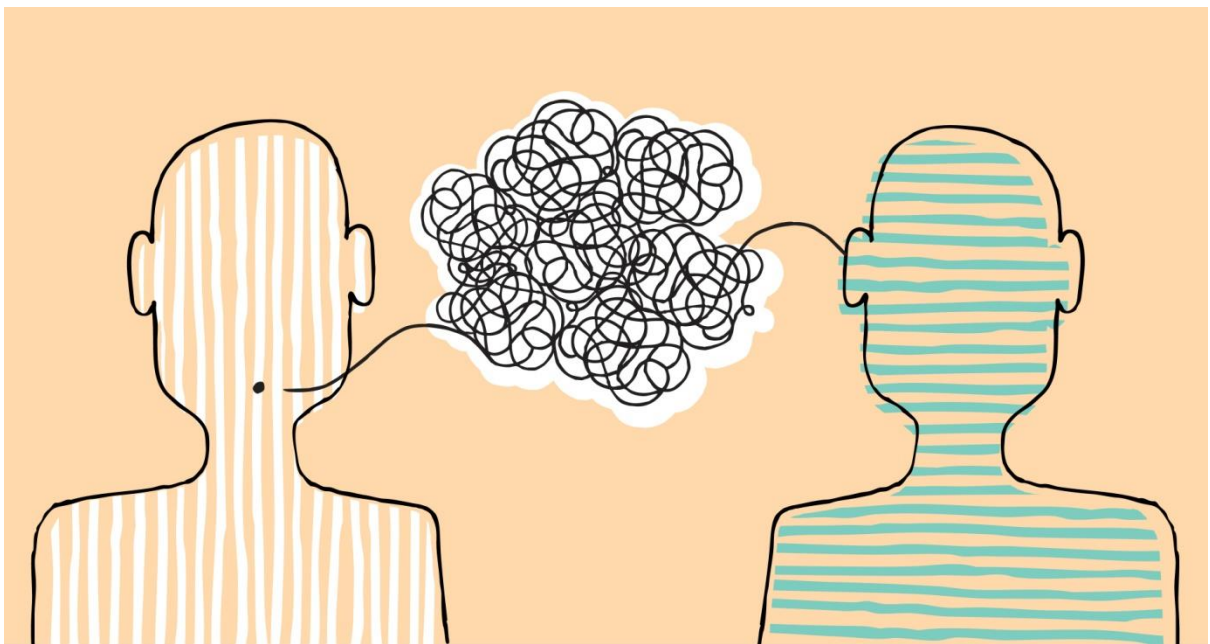


# Numark Core Leadership Module



Effective communication and  
feedback skills

**NUMARK+**

a PHOENIX Pharmacy Partnership member

## **Session Objectives**

By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- explain the importance of effective communication skills
- recognise the need to challenge and review the way you communicate
- utilise key strategies to ensure messages are understood
- provide both positive and negative feedback to others

## Communication is easy isn't it?

The reality is that communication isn't easy, but it is so critical to the successful running of a business, both in terms of tasks being completed effectively and the engagement levels of your staff.

### Benefits of successful communication

- Less mistakes
- Happier customers
- Motivated staff
- Informed staff
- Things are done quicker
- Improved business results

## The importance of the REASON WHY?

Our brains are all simply programmed to want reasoning behind things, which is why as children we constantly ask 'why' and to be told a 'reason why' can be motivating to us.

Communication can very often fail when we don't give people all the information they need.

**For example** – Let's say your team need to do one of their regular tasks slightly differently due to new legislation coming in force that the pharmacy has to follow. If you are clear with your team the reason behind this they are more likely to follow your instructions. If you just tell them to do it differently, would they do it? Why would they want to?

## Why don't people listen!

Don't expect people to take in and remember everything that they see/hear all the time, apparently when we have a **10 minute conversation** with someone they only remember about **5 minutes of that conversation!**

By increasing a person's understanding and making them aware of why it is important to them, increases the likelihood of them both listening and remembering what has been said. It can be a huge move forward in communication. People also start to feel valued and more involved as they are given reasons for everything.

### 3 benefits of giving a 'reason why'

- People act on things
- People actually 'listen' and 'hear'
- People feel more involved and motivated

This approach is also useful to remember when dealing with patients or customers. They are more likely to remember or take on-board the advice given to them if provided with a reason why.

### Keys to successful communication

- The foundation of effective communication is **personal responsibility**. It is up to **YOU** to ensure that the other person has understood.
- Make the 'whys' crystal clear – the more we understand the reason why, the more we understand the communication.
- Ensure a person truly understands what you are trying to communicate by asking them. It is very easy to assume that people think in the same way as us.
- **See it through the other person's eyes.** We all have different views of the world and the only way to ensure someone has understood and taken on board what we are communicating is to make it 'real' to them.

### Avoid these common assumptions...

**“They don't need to hear the full story”** Sometimes we just pass on the part of the information we feel someone needs to know, but don't maybe go into the 'why' they need to do it or the background behind it! By leaving out this information, this can sometimes leave them unclear on exactly what they need to do and perhaps less motivated to do it.

**“They've been told before”** Just because someone has been told before, does not necessarily mean they will remember what they were told and they may still have questions to ask.

**“I know what you need to know better than you do”** Do you? The key to communication is ensuring that the receiver is clear on the information you want to give them. They are the expert on knowing what they need to be told to understand it.

**“I understand what I’m saying perfectly, so you should to”** What might be perfectly clear to you, may mean nothing to someone else. Are you speaking their language, using loads of jargon or talking about something you’ve dealt with for years? Look at what you need to communicate and ask yourself ‘would your receiver understand?’

**Adapt your communication style/approach based on the person** – a one-fits-all approach doesn’t always work for communication and you may need to communicate differently to different people.

**Think about communication methods** - do you have a notice board that you use? Do any of your team read it or has it just become a decorative item on the wall that no-one even sees anymore? Don’t be afraid to try different things and see how they work and change things to get attention

**Review for next time** - it’s something we rarely do but if something hasn’t worked or your staff/customers are saying that they are never communicated to, then what could you change or improve?

## **Providing effective feedback**

Giving feedback to your team is a critical skill to manage their performance and move them forward

### **Feedback helps people...**

- Understand job expectations
- Know what they do well
- Identify learning and development opportunities
- Set achievable goals
- Feel more involved and motivated
- Take control of their own performance

## Feedback helps the business

- Reinforce good working habits
- Redirect poor working habits
- Improve working relationships
- Improve business performance

## What exactly is feedback?

There are two types of feedback, motivational and developmental.

- **Motivational** feedback contains praise and encouragement for things that are done well.
- **Developmental** feedback focuses on improvement and development areas. You ask the individual what needs to be improved or further developed and add possible actions.

The key is to give **balanced feedback**. Balanced feedback should have the right portion of motivational and developmental elements.

You may have heard of the 'feedback sandwich' approach, where you say something positive, then the negative and finish on a positive. Be wary of this approach though as it can negate any developmental needs. A positive followed by what they need to do can work better.

## Feedback models

There are many different feedback models.

One you can try is to actually move the focus of giving the feedback back to the individual as follows:

- **Ask** the individual to comment on their own performance
- **Ask** them what they have done well?
- **What** hasn't gone so well?
- **What** could they have done differently?
- **Agree** next steps

An alternative model which may be more useful when you feel you need to direct the feedback more is the **OIS** model. This can be a better model for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

- **Observation** – start with what you saw
- **Impact** – what is the impact/result of the observation
- **Suggestion** – Possible changes to make with their agreement

*e.g. “I noticed that you have been 30 minutes late the last few mornings and this has had an impact on us opening the shop on time and leaving some pre-opening tasks not completed. I need you to ensure that you arrive to work on time, do you think you will be able to do this?”*

## Feedback top tips

- **Be task or goal specific**  
You are not feeding back on THEM as a person, but on their actions or behaviours. Stick to the facts! If you tell someone they acted unprofessionally, what does that actually mean? Too loud, friendly, poorly dressed? Stick to what you know firsthand too as it is difficult to give feedback based on other views.
- **Make it regular**  
Feedback shouldn't just be planned for yearly appraisals; it should be a frequent event which is always taking place.
- **Catch people doing things right**  
It is so easy to only give feedback when things have gone wrong. In reality people get more right than they do wrong at work, so make a point of noticing when people do things right.
- **Feedback as early as possible**  
Whether the feedback is motivational or developmental give it as early as appropriate. It is more likely to be understood and taken on board. The only exception is if the situation is highly emotional or perhaps in front of a customer, in which case wait until everyone has calmed down.
- **Avoid feedback that cannot be acted upon**  
The purpose of giving the feedback is to facilitate action. Make sure it can be acted upon.

- **Check the feedback is understood**  
Back to your communication skills! Have you given them a 'reason why' to help them understand?
- **Give the recipient chance to respond**
- **Use non-threatening language**  
When giving developmental feedback, choose your words carefully. Whilst you have to make it clear the consequences if improvements are not achieved, you don't need to do it in a threatening way. Remember you are providing feedback to improve a situation or performance.

Remember feedback is often seen between a manager/supervisor and employee. However feedback can, and should be given up, down and laterally. The same principles apply.