

Professional Communication in the Workplace:

Building Respect, Trust, and Strong Working
Relationships

PRESENTED BY: WHEELER EAP

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Why Communication Matter

Build Trust

Reduce Misunderstandings

Solve problems together

Strengthen teamwork

Create a respectful workplace

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Today's Objectives

By the end of today's workshop, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Recognize common communication styles.
- ✓ Communicate professionally during challenging situations.
- ✓ Give and receive feedback respectfully.
- ✓ Build positive workplace relationships.

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Communication Looks Different for Everyone

People communicate differently
because of:

- Personality
- Life Experiences
- Culture
- Generation
- Job responsibilities
- Stress

Different doesn't mean wrong.

Four Communication Styles

Passive

Aggressive

Passive-
Aggressive

Assertive

Four Common Communication Styles

Understanding how different communication styles influence workplace interactions

We All Have Different Ways of Communicating

There is no "perfect" communication style. Most people use different styles depending on the situation. Understanding these styles can help us communicate more effectively.

Communication Style	What It Means	Workplace Example
Passive	You avoid speaking up, even when something is important to you. You may stay quiet to avoid conflict.	"It's okay...I'll just do it," even though you're frustrated.
Aggressive	You express your thoughts in a way that may come across as angry, demanding, or disrespectful toward others.	Raising your voice or blaming someone during a disagreement.
Passive-Aggressive	Instead of saying what's bothering you directly, you express it indirectly through sarcasm, avoidance, or negative comments.	Saying "Fine, whatever," when you're upset instead of explaining why.
Assertive	You express your thoughts honestly and respectfully while also listening to others.	"I'd like to talk about something that's been concerning me."

What is Assertive Communication?

Being assertive means expressing your thoughts, concerns, or needs clearly and honestly and respectfully while also respecting the thoughts and feelings of others.

People who communicate assertively:

- ✓ Speak calmly and respectfully.
- ✓ Clearly explain their thoughts.
- ✓ Listen to understand others.
- ✓ Ask questions instead of making assumptions.
- ✓ Focus on solving problems together.

Remember:

*Assertive does not mean being rude or demanding.
It means being respectful while speaking honestly.*

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Listening is More Than Hearing

Active listening means giving someone your full attention so you can truly understand what they are saying before responding.

Good listeners:

- ✓ Put distractions aside.
- ✓ Allow the other person to finish speaking.
- ✓ Ask questions if something isn't clear.
- ✓ Repeat or summarize important points.
- ✓ Focus on understanding instead of preparing a response.

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

The Power of Respectful Language

Instead of blaming  Use respectful observations.

Instead of assumptions  Ask questions.

Instead of reacting  Respond thoughtfully

Giving Feedback Professionally

Constructive feedback is information shared to help someone improve or grow. It focuses on solving a problem rather than criticizing a person.

Constructive feedback should be:

- Respectful
- Specific
- Timely
- Focused on behaviors-not personality
- Shared with the goal of helping

Example:

Instead of- "You're always late."

Try- "I've noticed you've arrived after our scheduled start time several times this month. Is there anything getting in the way, and how can we address it?"

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Receiving Feedback Professionally

How can we respond to feedback?

Receiving feedback isn't always easy. A professional response includes:

- Listening without interrupting.
- Asking questions to understand.
- Taking time to reflect.
- Looking for opportunities to improve.
- Thanking the person for sharing their perspective.

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

When Conversations Become Challenging

A difficult conversation is any conversation where people disagree, emotions are strong, or the topic feels uncomfortable.

Examples include:

- Receiving criticism
- Correcting a misunderstanding
- Addressing a workplace concern
- Discussing different opinions
- Talking through a mistake

Remember:

The goal isn't to avoid these conversations.

The goal is to handle them respectfully.

Responding Instead of Reacting

What is the Difference?

Reacting means responding immediately based on emotion.

Responding means taking a moment to think before speaking.

When emotions are high:

1. Pause.
2. Take a breath.
3. Listen carefully.
4. Speak respectfully.
5. Focus on finding a solution.

A calm response often leads to a better outcome than an immediate reaction.

Appreciating Different Perspectives

What Does “**Different Perspectives**” Mean?

Each of us has different experiences that shape how we think, communicate, and solve problems.

These difference may include:

- Culture
- Family background
- Work experience
- Age and generation
- Personal values
- Communication preferences.

Remember

Different perspectives can help teams find stronger solutions when everyone feels respected.

Scenario One

A coworker seems frustrated and responds sharply during a meeting.

What is the **BEST** response?

- A. Respond with equal frustration.
- B. Stay calm, ask questions, and keep the conversation respectful.
- C. Ignore the situation completely.

Scenario Two

Your supervisor provides constructive feedback.

What is the **BEST** response?

- A. Become defensive.
- B. Ask questions to better understand expectations.
- C. Tell coworkers the feedback was unfair.

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Building a Positive Workplace

Small actions make a difference.

- Be respectful.
- Listen first.
- Communicate clearly.
- Address concerns early.
- Focus on solutions.

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

Key Takeaways

Professional communication is about:

- Respect
- Listening
- Understanding
- Collaboration
- Continuous improvement

1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

You're not alone-Wheeler's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Is Here to Help

EAP provides confidential support and resources to help employees, and their household members navigate both personal and work-related challenges.

EAP Can Help With

- Managing workplace stress
- Improving communication skills
- Navigating difficult conversations
- Conflict Resolutions
- Work-life balance
- Relationship and family concerns
- Emotional well-being
- Referrals to additional resources



1-800-275-3327

WheelerHealth.org/EAP

THANK YOU