

Session: Effective communication

Aim of session: The aim of the task is to acknowledge the importance of good communication, referring to suggested articles, as well as practicing the appropriate use of language.

Material needed: *Effective Communication Leads to Understanding*, Vince Fitzpatrick, April 26, 2010; “Effective e-mail communication” by the Writing Center of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; additionally – a mini dictionary prepared for the purpose of this exercise by Katarzyna Ciupa (University of Lodz, Poland) that is available for any user.

Time of session: 2,5-3 hours (2 readings, 2 exercises in a written form uploaded into a platform)

Description of session: A very important aspect of a successful interaction between students and partner institutions is communication. The participants are expected to read two articles: “Effective Communication leads to Understanding” by Vince Fitzpatrick and “Effective e-mail communication” by the Writing Center of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The second tasks consists in filling the gaps in a letter.

Effective communication is strongly connected with listening to our partners in conversation. The aim of the communication is to receiving the information we need or to be understood by our listeners. To have the possibility to improve students’ experience it is essential to recognize their needs, which means that the university staff needs to be good listeners. This task is a reminder of the topic, as it is well known how important understanding in a conversation is. It is also an introduction to a physical training where based on the online activities, the main topics can be discussed.

The participants read two texts, which introduce the topic of an effective communication. After reading the texts, learners have two exercises to do – one is about filling the missing words and phrases to practice the appropriate language use, the second one is about developing vocabulary. The task is evaluated by the learners and is used as a basis for further discussion during a physical meeting or while organizing a discussion group. It is expected that the task will influence learners view on the importance of a good communication, which is necessary to work with international students and in professional life in general.

Text for learners: Basic communication skills are necessary for successful interaction, both with students and partner institutions. To get a wider view on the topic of effective communication, please read two articles: “Effective Communication leads to Understanding” by Vince Fitzpatrick and “Effective e-mail communication” by the Writing Center of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As a short exercise, please fill in the missing words and phrases in the letter (for self-verification you will find the filled in letter below), then find synonyms of all phrases used (please search for more examples using your favourite dictionaries). Additionally, please find enclosed a mini dictionary for your use. The task allows you to practice using suitable language for official correspondence.

Other notes:

The task can be used as an introduction to the topic of effective communication and gives a good preparation for some of the panels during any physical training or discussion group. It reminds how important an effective communication is.

Official language mini dictionary

Definition - a language that has a special status in the legal, political and educational life of a place

Appropriate salutations

- Dear Mr Hill
- Dear Ms Ender
- Dear Sir
- Dear Sirs
- Dear Madam
- Dear Sir or Madam
- Dear Hiring Manager
- To Whom It May Concern
- Dear Human Resources Manager

Beginning

- I am writing to inform you that ... / to tell you about ... to confirm ... to request ... to enquire about ...
- I am contacting you for the following reason.
- I received your address from ... and would like to ...
- Having seen your advertisement in ... , I would like to ...
- I recently read/heard about . . . and would like to know . . .

Referring to last meeting/letter

- Thank you for your letter of September 25 ...
- Thank you for contacting me/us.
- Thank you for your letter regarding ...
- It was a pleasure meeting you in London last week.
- I enjoyed having lunch with you last month in London.
- I would just like to confirm the main points we discussed on Tuesday . . .
- With reference to our telephone conversation yesterday ...
- In reply to your request ...

- I am writing in regard to . . .
- I am writing in reference to . . .
- Please refer to the enclosed invoice/brochure.
- I hope you have had a chance to look over the materials we sent.

Making a request

- We would appreciate it if you would ...
- I would be grateful if you could...
- Could you please send me . . .
- Could you possibly tell us/let us have...
- In addition, I would like to receive ...
- It would be helpful if you could send us ...
- I am interested in (obtaining/receiving...)
- I would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.
- Please let me know what action you propose to take.
- I am writing to inquire about . . .
- I am writing in reference to . . .
- I read/heard . . . and would like to know . . .
- Could you please send me . . .
- Could you fax me the results of ...
- I would like to order ...
- I would be very grateful if you could send me this information.
- Please return the enclosed envelope with ...

Response to request

- Thank you for your interest/inquiry
- Enclosed is the information you requested.
- You can learn more about this at . . .
- If you have further questions,
- If you require assistance, please contact:
- If I can be of more help, please feel free to contact me at . . .

Offering assistance

- Would you like me/us to ...
- We are willing to ...
- Our company would be pleased to ...
- We would be happy to ...

Sharing good news

- We are pleased to announce that ...
- I am delighted to inform you that ...

Expressing goodwill

- Thank you for your hospitality.
- I enjoyed having lunch with you last week while I was in New York.
- Congratulations on your promotion to General Manager.
- I want(ed) to congratulate you on your new position.
- I was happy to hear that contract negotiations went well.

Sharing bad news

- We regret to inform you that ...
- Unfortunately we cannot/we are unable to ...
- After careful consideration we have decided not to ...

Sample Sentences: Confirmation

- I am writing to confirm . . .
- I would like to confirm what we discussed last Friday.
- I would just like to confirm the main points we discussed . . .

Sample Sentences: Notification

- I am writing to let you know that . . .
- Please be aware/informed that . . .
- I would like to inform you of a recent policy change.
- I am happy to inform you that . . .
- Your request for funding has been approved.

Claims

- I am writing to complain about ...
- We regret to inform you that ...
- I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with ...

Apologies

- I would like to apologize for ...

- Once again, I apologise for any inconvenience.
- We are sorry for the delay in replying ...

Orders

- We are pleased to place an order with your company for ...
- We would like to cancel our order n°...
- I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of your order n°...
- Your order will be processed as quickly as possible.
- Unfortunately these articles are no longer available/are out of stock.
- We can guarantee delivery before ...
- Please confirm receipt of our order.

Prices/costs/payments

- Please send us your price list.
- Please send payment as soon as possible.
- Our records show that we have not yet received payment of ...
- You will find enclosed our most recent catalogue and price list.
- Our terms of payment are as follows : ...

Enclosing documents

- I am enclosing ...
- You will find enclosed ...
- Please find enclosed ...

Closing the letter

- If we can be of any further assistance, please let me/us know.
- If I can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me/us.
- If you require more information ...
- For further details ...
- Thank you for your help.
- We hope you are happy with this arrangement.
- We look forward to a successful working relationship in the future.
- We would be (very) pleased to do business with your company.
- I would be happy to have an opportunity to work with your firm.
- We would be happy to . . .
- If we can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to ask.

Farewell phrases

- I look forward to seeing you next week.



- Looking forward to hearing from you
- I look forward to meeting you.
- I would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience
- Sincerely
- Sincerely yours
- Regards
- Best
- Best regards
- Kind regards
- Yours truly
- Most sincerely
- Respectfully
- Respectfully yours
- Thank you
- Thank you for your consideration