

Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

Supporting the use of Developing Speaking and Listening
Skills: a support pack for staff working with offenders

Participant Pack

Skills for Life Improvement Programme

Programme

9.30	Coffee and registration
10.00	Welcome and introduction
10.15	Speaking and listening skills – why do they matter and how do we develop them?
10.45	Reflective practice
11.00	Break
11.15	Module 1: Questioning and checking understanding
12.00	Providing oral feedback
12.45	Lunch
13.30	Module 2: Non verbal communication
14.00	Module 3: Active listening
14.30	Module 4: Managing group discussions
15.15	Module 5: Using technical language
15.45	Evaluation
16.00	Close

Rules for Speed dating discussion

Work in a group with even numbers.

1. Place chairs in an inner circle, facing outwards, and place the same number of chairs in an outer circle, facing inwards.
2. Sit in pairs, facing each other, and discuss a current topic.
3. Discuss the topic for 3 minutes, making sure each person has a chance to speak.
4. When the time is up, the outer circle stands up and moves one place to the right.
5. Before the new pair starts their conversation, each person has to summarise their previous partner's contribution.
6. Continue circulating, summarising previous partners' points until they get back to their first 'date'.

Icebreakers/Oral starters and plenaries

Three Questions Game

Everyone in the group writes down 3 provoking questions they would like to ask others in the group (not the normal "what's your name" type questions but something like, "Where is the most interesting place you have ever been?" or "who would you most like to be stuck in a lift with?") Give them time to mingle, and to ask three different people in the group one of their three questions.

Get back together and have each person must stand and give their name. As they say their name, ask the group to tell what they know about this person.

The Artist Game

Give everyone a piece of paper and a pencil. In 5 minutes they must draw a picture that conveys who they are with out writing any words or numbers. At the end of 5 minutes the host collects the pictures. Show the pictures to the group one at a time and have them try to guess who drew it. After this allow each of the artists to introduce themselves and explain how their work clearly conveys who they are.

Three in Common Game

Break the group into groups of three. Their objective is for each group to find 3 things they have in common. But not normal things like age, sex or hair color. It must be three uncommon things. After letting the groups converse for 10 - 15 minutes, they (as a group) must tell the rest of the groups the 3 things they have in common.

Marooned Game

You are marooned on an island. What five (you can use a different number, such as seven, depending upon the size of each team) items would you have brought with you if you knew there was a chance that you might be stranded. Note that they are only allowed five items per team, not per person. You can have them write their items on a flip chart and discuss and defend their choices with the whole group. This activity helps them to learn about other's values and problem solving styles and promotes teamwork.

Story Time Game

The facilitator starts a story by saying a sentence. It then goes in a circle, each person adding a sentence onto the story-after repeating each sentence that's already been added.

Ball Toss Game

This is a semi-review and wake-up exercise when covering material that requires heavy concentration. Have everyone stand up and form a resemblance of a circle. It does not have to be perfect, but they should all be facing in, looking at each other. Toss a ball or bean bag to a person and have to tell what they thought was the most important learning concept was. They then toss the ball to someone and that person explains what they thought was the most important concept. Continue the exercise until everyone has caught the ball at least once and explained an important concept of the material just covered.

Four Facts Game

Each person writes down four facts about themselves, one of which is a lie. Each person takes turns reading their list aloud and the rest of the team writes down the one they think is the lie. When all are done reading the lists aloud, the first person reads their list again and identifies the lie. The team sees how well they did.

A to Z Freeze Game

Ask participants to recite the alphabet in unison. Let them go on for a while until you yell "Stop!" At that point, identify the letter they stopped on and ask everyone to share something they are looking forward to that begins with that letter. Stop them on a different letter and ask participants to share a personality trait they possess that begins with that letter. Come up with different questions to ask for each letter and repeat the process.

Acrostics

Come up with a rhyme for your name, e.g. **S**ophisticated, **U**nusual and **E**legant = Sue

Resources for starter activities could include:

- ❖ images or photos
- ❖ a video clip
- ❖ a collection of artefacts, like a story box
- ❖ an audio clip, e.g. a radio article, a story, music
- ❖ movement – demonstrating angles with an arm or a leg, and shapes such as circles with the hands
- ❖ a quiz or setting a quick challenge
- ❖ 'odd one out' – looking for characteristics or classifications
- ❖ '5W' – learners devise their own questions in response to a stimulus (e.g. quotation, cartoon, graph, object, photo, content from previous lesson) using who, what, when, where and why as prompts.

Activities for plenaries could include:

- ❖ **Golden Rules:** Learners work in pairs to devise one or two golden rules for the activity they have carried out, that is, something they feel they have learnt from the lesson and want to remember for future use. This can be written on a sticky note. Then they snowball to fours to gather and discuss all the suggestions. Groups can gather all the 'rules' together on a flip chart or whiteboard for review. This also helps the teacher to review the learning against the lesson objectives.
- ❖ **Phone a friend:** Learners devise questions they would like to ask as a result of their lesson, using whatever communication method is appropriate for them. This could be written or they could create sound files using speech or a speaking device. Alternatively, questions can be typed into a computer fitted with a 'text to voice' program. The questions could be gathered together and used as a prompt to start the next session.
- ❖ **Digital portfolio:** A digital camera can be used to capture an image for the learner's log. A sound file comment or written caption can be added to it.
- ❖ **Traffic lights:** Teachers could use this kind of activity in groups or in a one-to-one session by providing three cards, one each of red, amber and green, for each learner. If the teacher is leading a review against the learning objective, learners can hold up or point to the relevant card to show:
 - what they understand and feel they can do well
 - what they are not 100% sure of
 - what needs further explanation.

Resources for starter activities and plenaries are taken from the Better Teaching Partnership, Module 2

Issues and Solutions

Issue: asking too many questions at once. Complex questions can confuse learners

Solutions:

- Separate out complex questions – ask questions that focus on one idea only
- Structure questions so they increase in complexity
- Wait for responses before asking another question
- Use direct language and keep question short.

Issue: asking difficult questions without leading up to them

Solutions:

- Plan a sequence of questions of increasing difficulty.
- Sequence questions to help learners move on to higher levels of thinking.
- Use scaffolded prompts to support shared understanding between teacher and learner about what they are learning in the session.

Issue: asking a question and then answering it yourself.

Solutions:

- Give learners enough time to think about the question. Research has shown that where teachers build in 'wait time' of 3 to 5 seconds, they get a better quality learner response in terms of longer and more thoughtful and creative answers.
- Use 'talk partners' to allow learners to discuss their responses with a partner before giving a reply.
- Use small prompts like 'I see..' or 'OK' to encourage further thinking.
- Give verbal encouragement, check understanding and give opportunities for rethinking and restating an idea...'Can you explain?' or 'Why do you think that?'
- Give positive feedback 'That's an interesting answer', 'I like the way you....'
- Allow enough response time for learners who have speech or hearing difficulties.

Issue: asking superficial questions, which don't help learners to understand the learning objective

Solutions:

- Plan probing questions in advance, to move learners' thinking on.
- Use questions such as 'Can you tell me more about that?' and 'What do you think your next step would be?' as probes.

Issue: focusing on a small number of learners and not involving them all.

Solutions:

- Use small white-boards for getting whole-class responses to closed questions (good for checking recall facts – spelling, calculations, vocabulary)
- Use a range of groupings and re-group regularly .
- Use strategies to increase discussion and questioning between learner – paired talk which is then shared with the next pair; colour or number groups.
- When taking group feedback, set group rules such as saying ‘pass’ if a learner does not want to carry on with the response or ‘phone a friend’ /‘ask the audience’ to involve someone else in the group for support.

Issue: dealing ineffectively with wrong answers or misconceptions.

Solutions:

- Teachers often worry that they will damage learners’ self-esteem by correcting them.
- Aim to support the learner in identifying where he/she has made the error. We look at using error marking schemes in literacy in the next section.
- In numeracy, use stems like ‘Let’s see where the process let you down...’ which some learners like as it externalises any feelings of ‘blame’.
- If an answer is partly correct, the teacher should acknowledge the parts that are correct and use scaffolded prompts to deal with the incorrect parts.

Taken from The Better Teaching Partnership, Module 2

Effective questioning

It is worth examining why teachers use questioning techniques. As practitioners, what do we want learners to do? Are we trying to jog their memories? Do we want to stimulate their thinking? Do the questions below tell you something about the learner’s thinking process? If so, how could you pursue the answer to help them to identify errors and explain misconceptions?

Question	Learner response
What number bus goes to your home?	Recall a fact
You measured a right angle when you drew that diagram. When might this skill be useful to you?	Broaden thinking to transfer a skill to a new situation
How did you measure the sand and cement for the mixture?	Explain a method in sequence
What do you notice about this stitching?	Critically appraise
What would have happened if you had done those things the other way round?	Hypothesise possibilities
What could be the reason for the cake sinking?	Analyse for a possible explanation
Why did you do it like that?	Explain the reasoning behind their method
Where do you put a full stop in a sentence?	Know a fact
Which of these poems do you like best?	Express an opinion

Effective questioning to extend a learners' thinking

If you ask questions, remember to put up with the silence that is necessary for thinking. Don't leap in too soon.

At the start of an activity

How are you going to tackle this?
What information do you have? What do you need to find out?
What equipment will you need?
What questions will you need to ask?
How are you going to record what you are doing?
What do you think the result might be?

Questions to check progress

Can you explain what you have done so far?
What else is there to do?
Why did you decide to do it that way?
Could there be a quicker way of doing this?
What do you mean by.....?
What did you notice when.....?
Have you thought of all the possibilities?
How can you be sure?

Questions for learners who are stuck

Can you describe the problem in your own words?
Can you talk me through what you have done so far?
What did you do last time? What is different this time?
Is there something that you already know that might help?
What about putting things in order?
Would a table /picture /diagram help?
Why not make a guess and see if it works?
Have you compared your work with anyone else's?

Once the learner has completed a task

How did you get your answer?
Why did that happen?
What would happen if.....?
Why did you do it that way?
Can you explain why it works?
Can you describe the way you did it?
What could you do next?
What have you learned/found out today?
If you were doing it again, what would you do differently?
Having done this, when could you use this information /idea again?
Did you use any new words today? What do they mean?

Prompts to promote further responses (from BTP, Module 5, Unit 2)

<p>Learners can feel that they are playing a game of “guess what’s in the teacher’s head” – especially if their response to a question leads to the teacher repeating the original question to someone else. Prompt further responses by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responding in a non-evaluative fashion • prompting others to respond • accepting a range of responses • using alternatives to questions as suggested below. 	
Invite the learner to elaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Say more about.....’
Cue alternative responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘There’s no right answer.’ • ‘What are the alternatives?’ • ‘Who’s got a different point of view?’
Challenge learners to provide reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Give reasons why....’
Make a challenging statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Supposing someone said.....’
Contribute your own thoughts or experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘I think that....’ • ‘Remember when...’
Use ‘think-pair-share’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow more thinking time • Discuss with a talk partner, then in a group with another pair • Pair learners with others who speak the same home or community language so that they can share a discussion in their home language
Allow rehearsal of responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Try out the answer in your head...’ • ‘Try out the answer on your partner.....’
Invite learners’ questions to other learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Would anyone like to ask _____ a question about that?’
Use thinking aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model questions • ‘I don’t quite understand.....’ • ‘I wonder if.....’
Ask a learner to invite a response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dara, would you ask someone else what they think?

Pitfalls of giving feedback

1. **Instant feedback from the teacher may not be sufficiently focused on learning objectives**

- The objectives need to be explored at the start and feedback should always be clearly related to them.
- 'Wait time' before and after questions or required responses allows learners to consider responses carefully. Other learners can be asked to reflect or comment on the responses before the teacher responds.
- Using prompts such as, 'would you like to say a bit more about that?' gives the teacher the opportunity to see what stage of thinking the learner has reached
- Teachers should try to use pre-emptive strategies e.g. discuss possible pitfalls, misconceptions and success criteria when setting tasks.
- Teachers need to consider the style of feedback given as well as the content e.g. the choice between simple acknowledgement of a correct answer or a response that urges further exploration etc.

2. **Unplanned responses can become random and fail to develop learning in a structured way**

- Questions and activities need to be planned and structured incrementally so that feedback also moves learning on.
- Make sure that time is built in for more extended or structured feedback at an appropriate time.

3. **Oral feedback is transient and 'of the moment'. Learners do not have time to reflect on the feedback and respond to it**

- Learners could be encouraged to reflect on the feedback and write their next steps or targets on their ILP. Not all responses will require reflection; some may simply confirm, acknowledge or encourage.

4. **Individuals dominate question and answer sessions and can slow down learning for others in the lesson/session/group**

- Offer more extended feedback in small groups
- Involve all learners in thinking, and target and support individuals
- Be prepared to say when an answer is wrong in order to avoid confusion or reinforce misconceptions
- Give learners practice in the ground rules of speaking and listening
- Feed back to the whole group when it is relevant, using methods other than questioning e.g. demonstration

5. Time for individual feedback is limited

- Try to offer collective feedback to the whole group where there are shared learning tasks
- Use small group or guided work on a regular basis to offer feedback to learners with similar needs

6. Learners may feel exposed by feedback in front of others

- Establish a supportive environment in which learners are happy to contribute
- Provide opportunities for individual or small group feedback
- Be willing to acknowledge your own errors or lack of specific knowledge
- Always reinforce the value of each learner's contribution
- Create a 'challenge' culture over time where genuine errors are seen as positive learning opportunities and where challenge is welcomed

Taken from the Better Teaching Partnership, Module 2, Unit 2

Ideas for Facilitating Group Discussions

‘Conch’: This term is taken from the novel *Lord of the Flies*, where a large shell (conch) is passed from person to person, and only the person holding the conch is able to speak.

Choose an object that you will pass around the group, to indicate which person has a right to speak at any one time. The object does not need to be passed in any particular direction. The person who wants to speak next can indicate that they want the object to be passed to them. You may also want to set a limit for the length of time a speaker may hold the object.

Take It in Turns (Circle Time): This is an opportunity to listen to each other without judging each other's comments, by taking turns.

Sit in a circle, and follow these rules:

Anyone may start. After that, each person will have the opportunity to speak in turn, going round the circle in a clockwise direction. If anyone doesn't want to speak, they only need say 'pass' when it's their turn. No one may comment, and no one may interrupt. Go round the circle as many times as it takes for people to have their say, or set a time limit.

Matchsticks: Each person in the group is given at least three matchsticks, or other tokens. Sit around a table. Every time somebody wants to contribute to the discussion with a comment or a question, they need to put one of their matchsticks down on the centre of the table. Once they have relinquished all their matchsticks, they are unable to contribute further.

(Variation: You can allow people to 'buy back' one matchstick, and gain one more chance to contribute, by summarising the main points of the discussion so far.)

Your Number's Up: Prepare two identical sets of cards, each card bearing a number. For example, if you have seven people in the group, you need cards numbered 1 to 7. The teacher gives one numbered card to each group member, and keeps the other set. One group member shuffles the teacher's set and lays the pack face down on the table. The teacher turns up one card, and the person holding the card with the same number is the first speaker. When they have made their contribution, another card is turned over and the person with that number must sum up what the previous speaker has said before making their own contribution. When all the cards have been used, the pack can be shuffled again so that the process can continue.

Taken from the Better Teaching Partnership, Module 4, Unit 2

Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

Supporting the use of Developing Speaking and Listening Skills:
A support pack for staff working with offenders
Participant Pack

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Activity 3: Laminated cards 1

**You measured a right angle when you drew that diagram.
When might this skill be useful to you?**

How did you measure the sand and cement for the mixture?

What do you notice about this stitching?

**What would have happened if you had done those things the
other way round?**

What could be the reason for the cake sinking?

Why did you do it like that?

Where do you put a full stop in a sentence?

Which of these poems do you like best?

What number bus goes to your home?

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Activity 3: Laminated cards 1

Recall a fact
Broaden thinking to transfer a skill to a new situation
Explain a method in sequence
Critically appraise
Hypothesise possibilities
Analyse for a possible explanation
Explain the reasoning behind their method
Know a fact
Express an opinion

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Activity 6: Laminated cards 3 (Your Number's up)

1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8

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9	9
10	10
11	11
12	12
13	13
14	14

Activity 7: Laminated cards 2

<p>How much learner talk is there in comparison to practitioner talk?</p>	<p>Do you give learners opportunities to discuss in pairs, small groups and as a whole group?</p>
<p>How do you ensure that learners respect each other's contributions to a discussion?</p>	<p>How do you enable learners to talk about things they are not sure about, to explore and develop their thinking?</p>

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Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

- A support pack for staff working with offenders



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Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

Aims and approach

- To develop your speaking and listening skills
- To develop the speaking and listening skills of your learners

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Welcome: Slide 2


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Learning Aims

- To explore the importance of speaking and listening
- To identify and practise ideas for developing speaking and listening skills of your learners
- To reflect on your own and your organisation's practice regarding developing speaking and listening skills
- To use the guide in your own context, including as a resource for staff development

Welcome: Slide 3

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Learning Outcomes

By the end of the training you will be able to:

- identify the range of issues that speaking and listening skills pose for your learners
- use a range of techniques to stimulate speaking and active listening for your learners
- use effective questioning and provide oral feedback to learners
- identify the importance of non-verbal communication in aspects of speaking and listening in an offender setting
- manage group discussions
- reflect on your use of technical language
- reflect on your practice

Welcome: Slide 4




What does the guide cover?

There are 5 modules:

- Module 1: Questioning and checking understanding
- Module 2: Non-verbal communication
- Module 3: Active listening
- Module 4: Managing group discussions
- Module 5: Using technical language

Welcome: Slide 5



Who are the learners?

- Learners improving their literacy and/or numeracy – up to Level 2
- Learners in young offender institutions, juvenile establishments or on probation
- Learners in this setting, for whom English is their first language

Welcome: Slide 6

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How can I use the guide?

- For information and reference
- A resource for induction or continuing professional development
- Confirm effective practice in areas of strength
- Advice and guidance in areas of weakness
- To develop reflective practice

Welcome: Slide 7

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Communication can include:

- Communication boards
- Voice synthesisers
- Makaton
- British Sign Language

Welcome: Slide 8



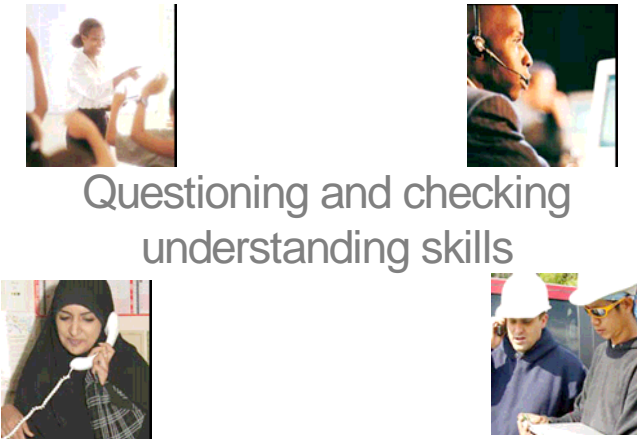
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“Reflective practice is important to the development of all professionals because it enables us to learn from experience. Although we all learn from experience, more and more experience does not guarantee more and more learning. Twenty years of teaching may not equate to twenty years of learning about teaching but may be only one year repeated twenty times.” (Page 4)

Activity 2: Slide 10

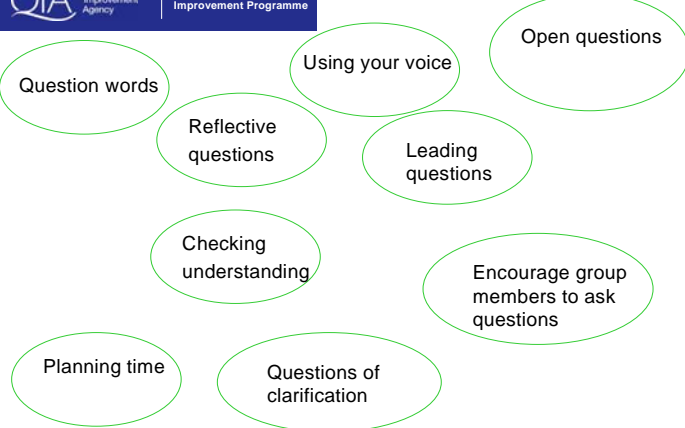
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Questioning and checking understanding skills

Activity 3: Slide 11

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Question words

Using your voice

Open questions

Reflective questions

Leading questions


Checking understanding

Encourage group members to ask questions

Planning time

Questions of clarification


Activity 3: Slide 12




Possible issues

- Asking too many questions at once
- Asking difficult questions without leading up to them
- Asking superficial questions, which don't help learners to understand the learning objective
- Asking a question and then answering it yourself
- Focusing on a small number of learners and not involving them all
- Dealing ineffectively with wrong answers or misconceptions.

Activity 3: Slide 13



Some advantages of providing oral feedback to learners



- Immediate
- Context specific
- Active and adaptable
- Ongoing
- Stimulating
- Personalised
- Versatile
- Motivating

Activity 4: Slide 14



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Any questions?

Activity 12: Slide 15