Professional Email Etiquette

Write clearly. Communicate professionally. Get results.



COMMUNICATION SKILLS · 70 SLIDES

UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL EMAIL COMMUNICATION

The Program Promise

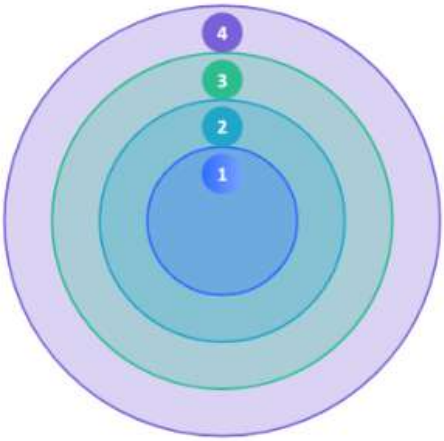
- Write emails with a clear purpose
- Choose appropriate tone and structure
- Reduce misunderstandings and unnecessary replies
- Communicate professionally across workplace situations

UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONAL EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Why Email Etiquette Matters



The Cost of Poor Emails



1. Repeated clarification requests
2. Missed deadlines and overlooked actions
3. Confusion about ownership
4. Damaged credibility and unnecessary conflict

Activity: Email Quality Audit

ACTIVITY

12 min

FORMAT

Individual, then pairs

OUTPUT

Three improvement practices

01 Recall a confusing workplace email

02 Identify what made it difficult to understand

03 Rewrite the central message

04 List three practices that would improve it

Start with the Purpose

Decide why you are writing

01

Identify the recipient's needs

02

Determine the required outcome

03

Remove information that does not support the purpose

04

Weak vs. Strong Subject Lines

WEAK
"Question."

→

STRONG
"Approval Required — Q4 Training Budget."

WEAK
"Meeting."

→

STRONG
"Project Review — Agenda and Actions for 28 October."

Specific. Descriptive. Actionable.

Make the Opening Direct

PURPOSE State the purpose early

CONTEXT Provide brief context

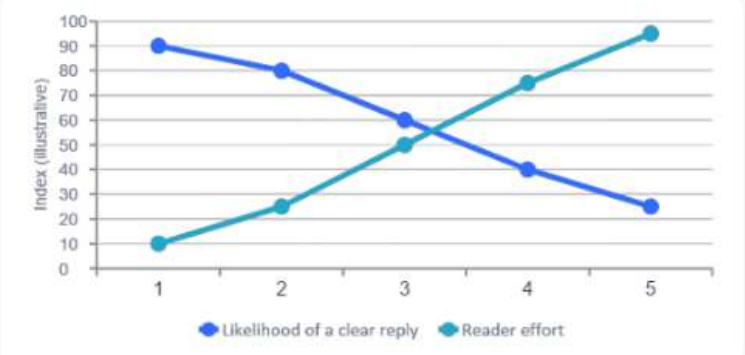
BREVITY Avoid lengthy introductions

READER Put the recipient's needs first

MOST IMPORTANT FIRST

Keep the Message Concise

Shorter emails are easier to act on



- Use short paragraphs
- Cover one main point at a time
- Remove repeated explanations
- Move complex detail to an attachment when appropriate

Attachments and Links

Mention important attachments in the message

Use clear, descriptive filenames

Check permissions before sharing links

Verify attachments and recipients before sending

Email Signatures

Kind regards,

Aisha Rahman
Senior Project Manager
Operations · +971 00 000 0000
name@company.com

Simple. Readable. On brand.

- Include your name and relevant role
- Add approved contact details
- Keep formatting simple and readable
- Follow organisational branding standards

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Proofread Before Sending

- [ ] Check names and recipient addresses
- [ ] Verify dates, numbers and attachments
- [ ] Review grammar and tone
- [ ] Confirm the request is unambiguous

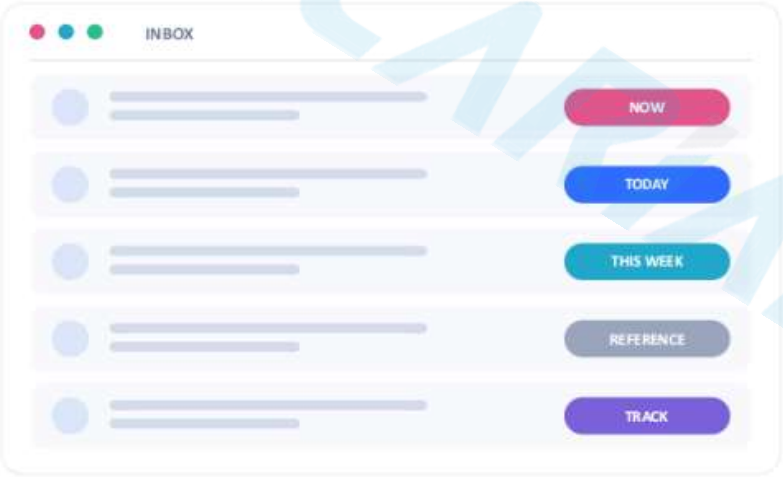
Manage Email Without Losing Your Day



ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE OF EMAIL BLOCKS

- 50s — Set specific times to process routine email
- 15s — Prioritise messages by impact and urgency
- 15s — Use folders, labels or rules where helpful
- 20s — Avoid constant checking when focused work is required

Prioritise Your Inbox



- Identify messages requiring immediate action
- Separate tasks from reference information
- Flag important deadlines
- Track commitments outside the inbox when appropriate

When to Reply and When to Wait

REPLY PROMPTLY

- Time-sensitive decisions
- Requests that unblock others

or

WAIT OR SET EXPECTATIONS

- Emotional emails: wait before replying
- Full answers that need time: acknowledge and give a date

Do not treat every email as equally urgent.

Email Quality Scorecard

	NOT YET				CLEARLY
Subject line communicates the purpose	1	2	3	4	5
Message is clear and concise	1	2	3	4	5
Tone is appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
Recipients and attachments are correct	1	2	3	4	5
Required action and timing are explicit	1	2	3	4	5

WORKPLACE EMAIL PRACTICE LAB · EMAIL LAB

Final Email Improvement Challenge

REVIEW → WEAKNESSES → REWRITE → EXPLAIN

01 Review a deliberately poor workplace email

02 Identify its major weaknesses

03 Rewrite it using the full email structure

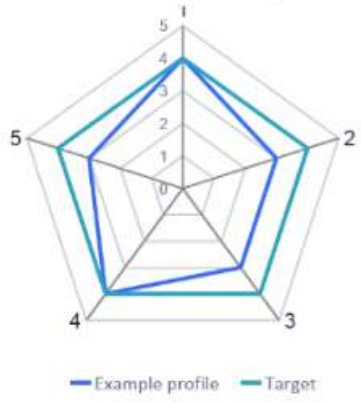
04 Explain how your version improves the outcome

ASSESSMENT AND PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Your Email Communication Profile

1. Identify your strongest email habit
2. Recognise your most common mistake
3. Review how you handle difficult messages
4. Select one improvement priority

EXAMPLE PROFILE · PLOT YOUR OWN SCORES, 1 TO 5



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Managing Difficult Personalities

Handle challenging behaviour with confidence.



COMMUNICATION SKILLS · 75 SLIDES

The Program Promise

- Recognise recurring difficult behaviours
- Respond without losing emotional control
- Communicate boundaries clearly
- Maintain professional relationships and accountability

What Makes Someone Difficult to Work With?

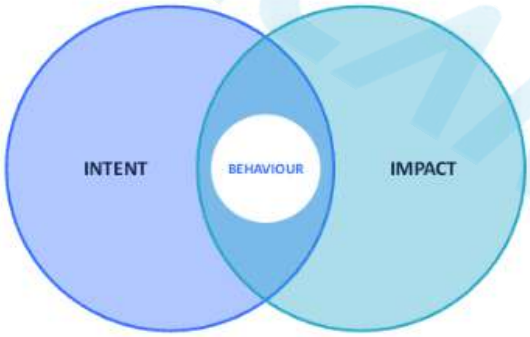
- Repeatedly dismissing others' views
- Avoiding responsibility
- Reacting defensively to feedback
- Creating unnecessary tension or confusion

Describe the behaviour, not the person.

Why Challenging Behaviours Occur



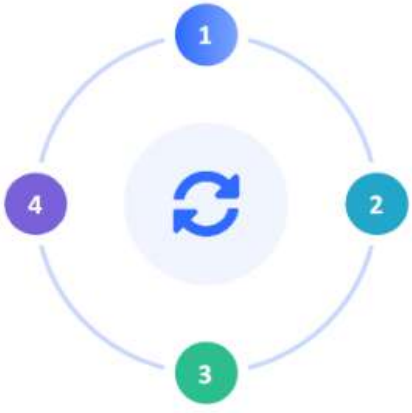
Intent vs. Impact



DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED

- Good intentions do not erase harmful impact
- Negative impact does not always prove bad intentions
- Describe observable behaviour
- Discuss its consequences and the required change

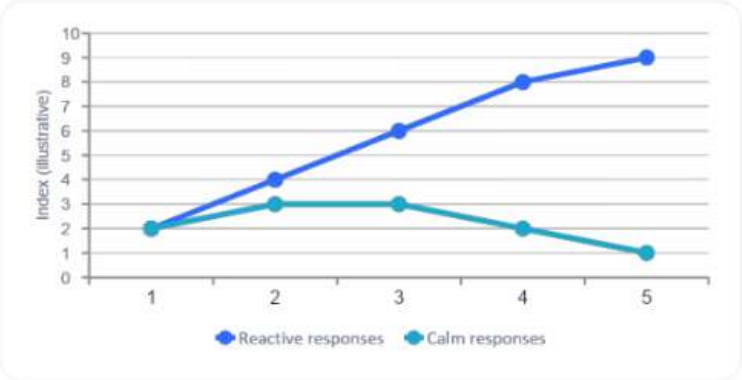
The Behaviour–Response Cycle



- A behaviour triggers an emotional reaction
- Your reaction influences the other person's response
- Repeated reactions can reinforce unhelpful patterns
- Change your response without accepting inappropriate behaviour

Why Emotional Control Matters

Calm responses de-escalate. Reactions escalate.



- Emotional reactions can escalate tension
- Defensive responses distract from the issue
- Calm communication improves clarity
- Self-control protects your professional credibility

Recognise Your Personal Triggers

Being interrupted or ignored

Receiving public criticism

Facing unfair blame

Losing control over a decision

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The Pause–Name–Choose Technique

Pause: avoid an automatic reaction

01

Name: identify the emotion or concern

02

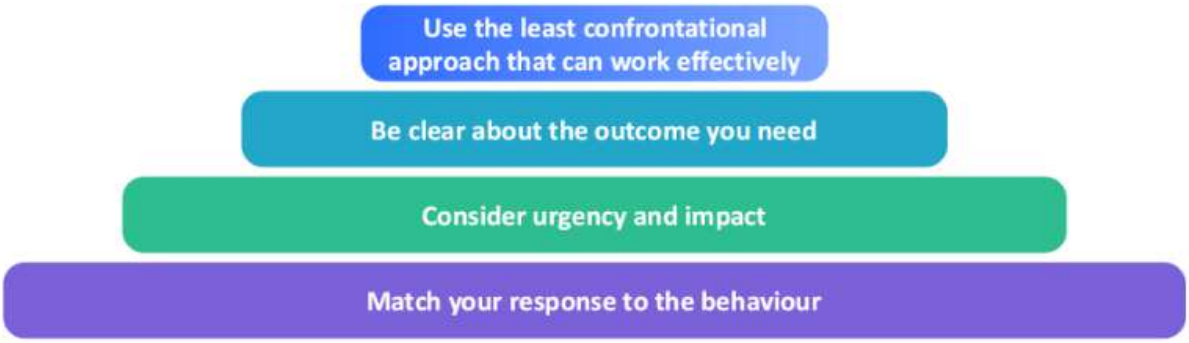
Choose: select a constructive response

03

Speak when you can remain clear and respectful

04

Choose the Right Communication Strategy



START AT THE BASE. ESCALATE ONLY WHEN NEEDED.

The DESC Assertive Communication Model

D

Describe

the observable behaviour

E

Express

its impact

S

Specify

the required change

C

Consequences

the constructive outcome or work implications

Handling Interruptions

STEP 1 — 1 — Finish your point calmly

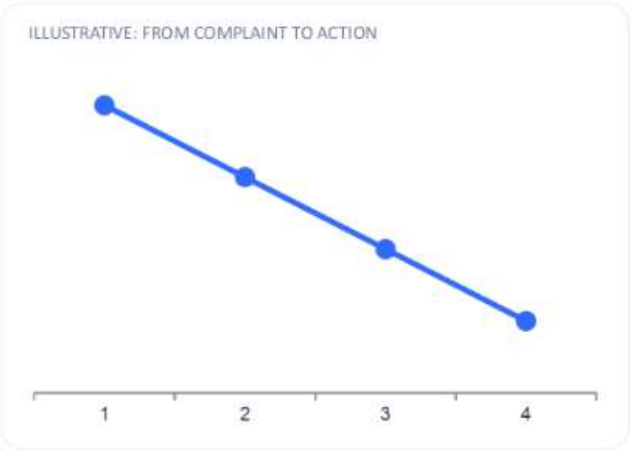
STEP 2 — 2 — Use a brief, respectful interruption when necessary

STEP 3 — 3 — Ask to complete your thought

STEP 4 — 4 — Establish turn-taking if the pattern continues

Calm, brief, repeatable.

Responding to Chronic Complaining

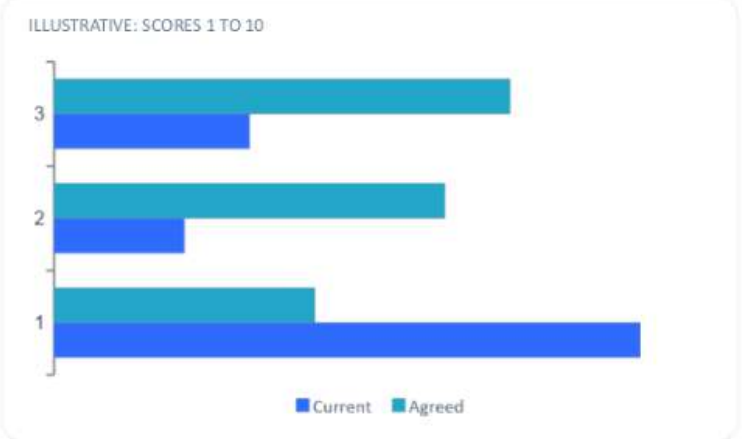


1. **Acknowledge**
   The concern
2. **Ask**
   What outcome would improve the situation
3. **Separate**
   Controllable issues from constraints
4. **Agree**
   On one practical action

Handling Competitive Behaviour



Communicating with a Micromanager



- Clarify expected outcomes and standards
- Agree on decision-making boundaries
- Establish predictable progress updates
- Demonstrate reliability through agreed milestones

Activity: Select the Right Response

ACTIVITY

20 min

FORMAT

Groups of three

OUTPUT

A justified strategy

01 Read a challenging workplace scenario

02 Identify the behaviour and its impact

03 Select an appropriate communication strategy

04 Explain why the strategy fits the situation

BOUNDARIES, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ESCALATION

Why Professional Boundaries Matter

BOUNDARIES

CLARITY
Clarify acceptable behaviour

CAPACITY
Protect time and responsibilities

PREVENTION
Prevent repeated misunderstandings

RESPECT
Maintain respect without unnecessary hostility

BOUNDARIES, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ESCALATION

Say No Without Damaging Relationships

ACKNOWLEDGE The request

EXPLAIN Your capacity or constraint

OFFER An alternative when feasible

AVOID Promising what you cannot deliver

Observer Evaluation Scorecard

	NOT YET				CLEARLY
Describes behaviour without labelling	1	2	3	4	5
Maintains emotional control	1	2	3	4	5
Communicates clearly and respectfully	1	2	3	4	5
Establishes a boundary or workable next step	1	2	3	4	5

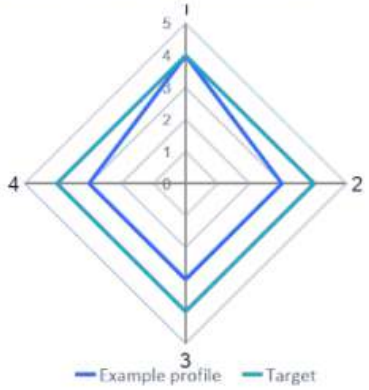
Group Reflection

- Which responses reduced tension?
- Which phrases triggered defensiveness?
- When was a boundary necessary?
- When would escalation be more appropriate?

Your Difficult-Interaction Profile

1. Identify your common triggers
2. Recognise your typical reaction
3. Identify one behaviour you find difficult to handle
4. Choose one response to practise

EXAMPLE PROFILE · PLOT YOUR OWN SCORES, 1 TO 5



COMMUNICATION SKILLS SERIES

Presentation Skills That Persuade

Facilitator Delivery Guide

Slide-by-slide guidance for all 80 slides

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS SERIES

Handling
Workplace Conflict

Facilitator Delivery Guide

Slide-by-slide guidance for all 72 slides

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS SERIES

Active Listening at Work

Facilitator Delivery Guide

Slide-by-slide guidance for all 70 slides

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS SERIES

Building Trust

Through Communication

Facilitator Delivery Guide

Slide-by-slide guidance for all 75 slides

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The 30-Day Application Plan

WEEK 1

Observe patterns and triggers

WEEK 2

Practise assertive responses

WEEK 3

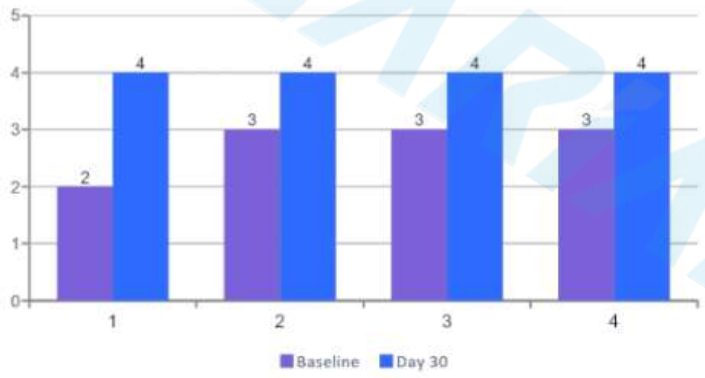
Address one recurring behaviour

WEEK 4

Review results and adjust your approach

Measuring Progress

EXAMPLE TRACKER · RATE EACH 1 TO 5



1. Fewer unproductive exchanges
2. Clearer responsibilities and boundaries
3. More constructive problem-solving
4. Better follow-through and professional cooperation

Final Knowledge Check

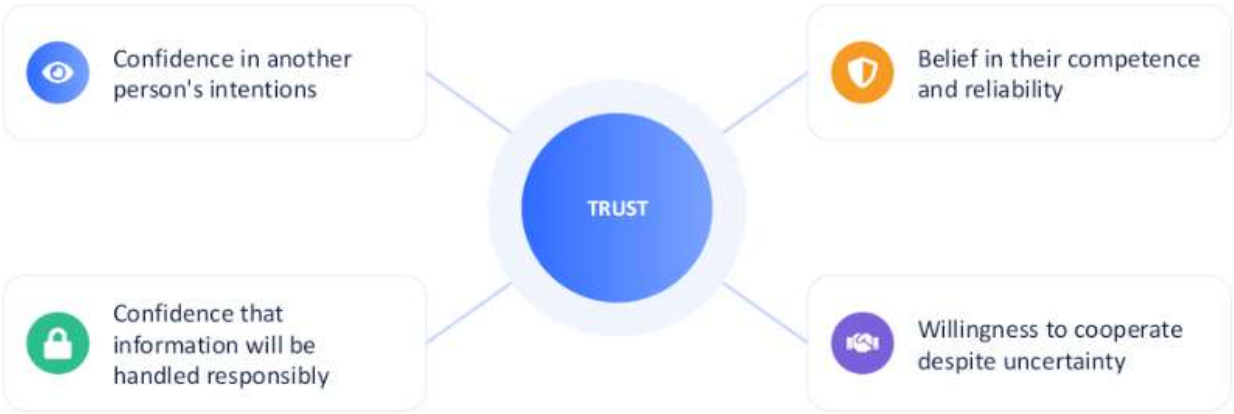
Distinguish behaviour from personality labels

Select a suitable response to common behaviours

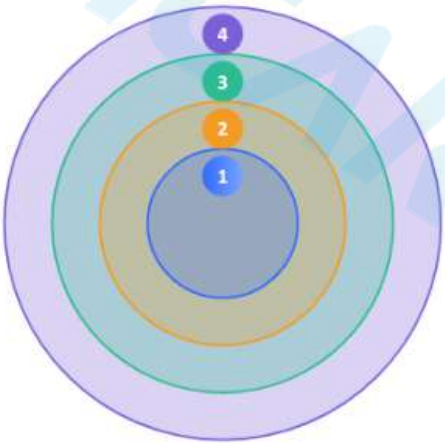
Apply the DESC model

Recognise when formal support is necessary

What Is Trust at Work?

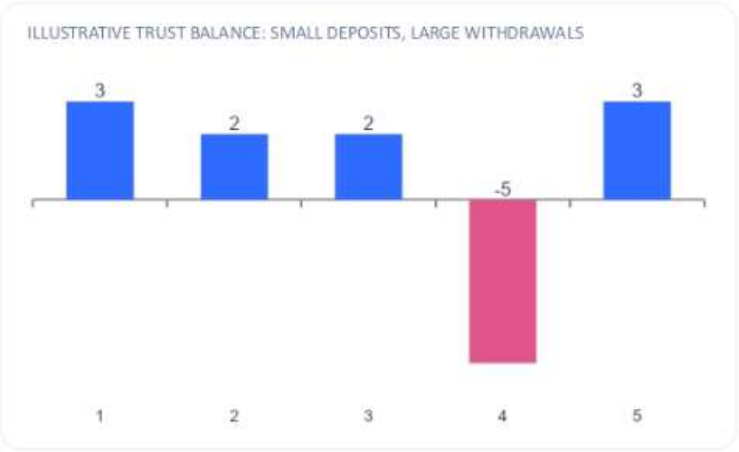


Why Trust Matters



1. Improves collaboration and information sharing
2. Makes difficult conversations easier
3. Reduces unnecessary checking and misunderstanding
4. Supports faster decisions and stronger relationships

Trust Is Built Through Everyday Interactions



- Keeping small commitments
- Sharing information at the right time
- Listening without dismissing concerns
- Treating people fairly when pressure rises

Trust vs. Likeability



- Trust does not require everyone to like you
- Respectful disagreement can strengthen trust
- Avoiding difficult truths may weaken credibility
- Fairness and consistency matter more than popularity

UNDERSTANDING TRUST AT WORK

The Trust Equation in Practice

SAY-DO
what you say must align with what you do

×

INTENT
your intentions should be understandable

×

REALISM
your commitments should be realistic

×

RESPECT
stay respectful under pressure

= **TRUST**

UNDERSTANDING TRUST AT WORK · ACTIVITY

Activity: Trust Builders and Trust Breakers

ACTIVITY

15 min

FORMAT

Pairs, then plenary

OUTPUT

Three behaviours to practise

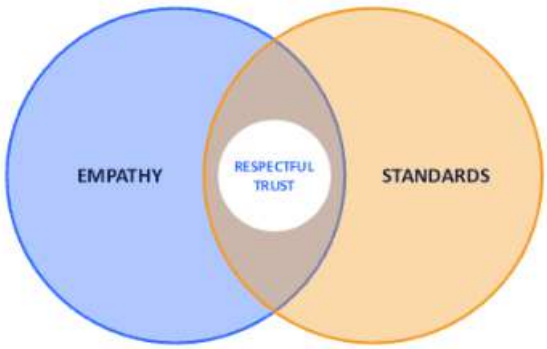
01 Recall a colleague you trust professionally

02 Identify the behaviours that earned your confidence

03 Identify communication behaviours that damage trust

04 Select three behaviours to practise consistently

Communicate with Empathy



CARE AND STANDARDS TOGETHER

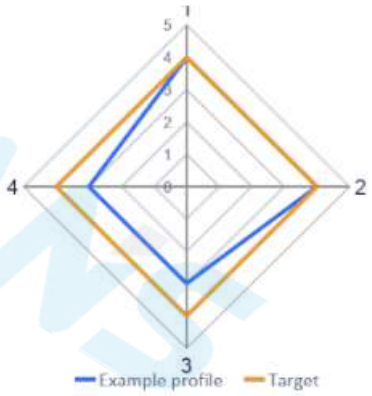
- Recognise the other person's situation
- Acknowledge the impact of your decisions
- Ask what support would be useful
- Remain considerate without abandoning necessary standards

THE COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOURS THAT BUILD TRUST

Be Consistent Under Pressure

1. Maintain respectful communication during disagreement
2. Apply standards fairly
3. Avoid changing your message to suit the audience
4. Address problems directly rather than spreading frustration

EXAMPLE PROFILE · PLOT YOUR OWN SCORES, 1 TO 5



THE COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOURS THAT BUILD TRUST

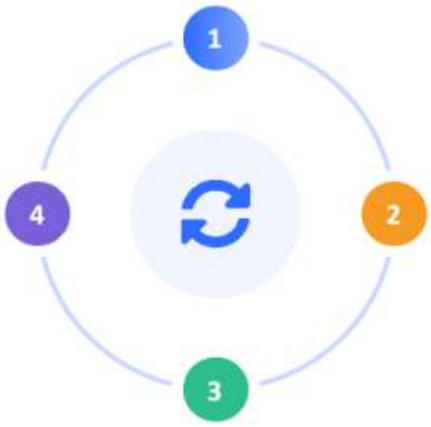
Give Credit Fairly



ILLUSTRATIVE SHARE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

- **30s** Recognise other people's contributions
- **25s** Distinguish your work from the team's work
- **20s** Share praise with the people who earned it
- **25s** Correct misunderstandings about ownership

The Reliability Loop



- Make a clear commitment
- Confirm ownership and timing
- Deliver or communicate a change early
- Close the loop with the relevant people

Communicating When You Do Not Know

KNOWN → UNKNOWN → PLAN → UPDATE

01 State what is known

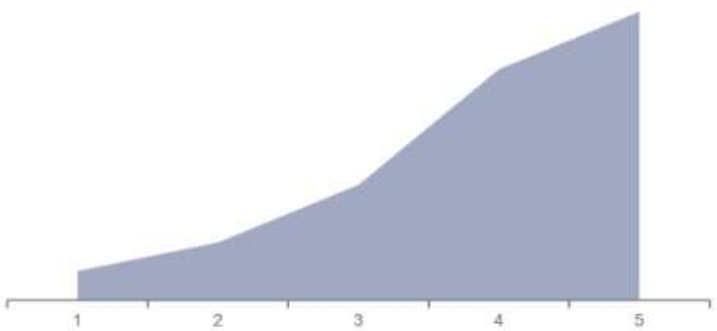
02 Identify what remains uncertain

03 Explain how you will find the answer

04 Give a realistic time for the next update

Communicating Bad News Early

ILLUSTRATIVE: THE COST OF A LATE SURPRISE



- Share the issue before it becomes a surprise
- Explain the likely impact
- Present available options
- Recommend the next action

Manage Information Gaps



- Identify what different stakeholders need to know
- Avoid selective updates that distort the picture
- Share confirmed information promptly
- Explain when further details will be available

Handle Rumours and Uncertainty

CONFIRMED FACT

- Share confirmed information promptly
- Direct questions to appropriate sources

VS

SPECULATION

- Do not repeat unverified claims
- Correct inaccurate information respectfully

Distinguish confirmed facts from speculation.

Trust and Psychological Safety



- Invite questions without embarrassment
- Respond constructively to mistakes
- Encourage respectful disagreement
- Never confuse psychological safety with absence of accountability

Case 4: Create a Shared Agreement

01 Information: identify the information each team needs	02 Decision rights: clarify decision rights and constraints
03 Confirmation: agree how delivery dates are confirmed	04 Escalation: define escalation and customer-update responsibilities

Case 4: Roleplay and Debrief



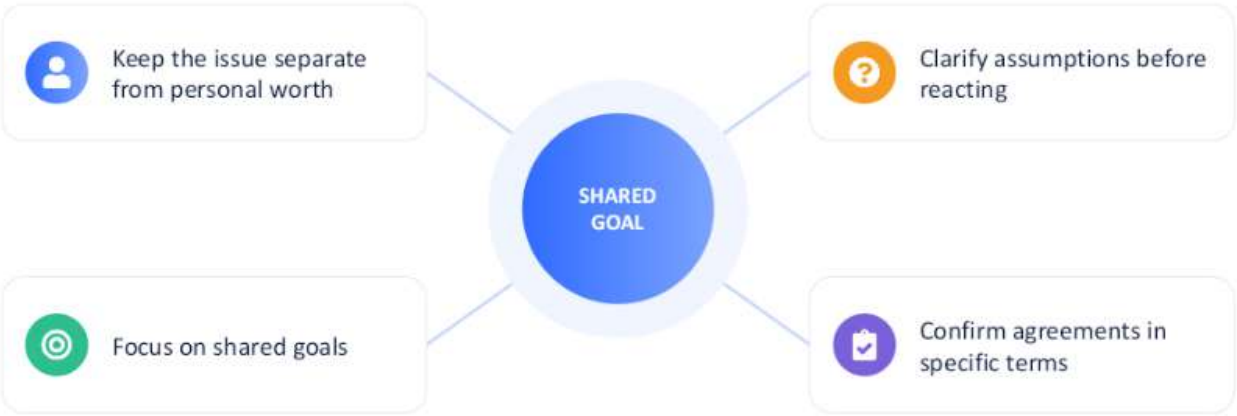
Shared customer outcome first.

Trust-Building

Add comment Edit slide

	NOT YET				CLEARLY
Was the communication honest and specific?	1	2	3	4	5
Did the speaker listen and acknowledge concerns?	1	2	3	4	5
Were commitments realistic?	1	2	3	4	5
Were next steps clearly agreed?	1	2	3	4	5

Communicate During Conflict



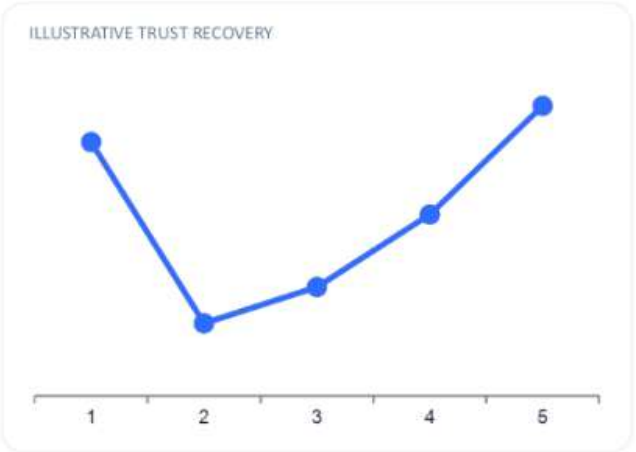
DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS WITHOUT LOSING TRUST

Apologise in a Way That Rebuilds Trust



DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS WITHOUT LOSING TRUST

Rebuilding Trust After a Breakdown



1. **Identify**
   What damaged confidence
2. **Agree**
   What needs to change
3. **Show**
   Demonstrate reliability over time
4. **Review**
   Progress without demanding forgiveness

How to use this guide

This guide tells a facilitator what to say, what to ask and how long to spend on each of the 80 slides in **Presentation Skills That Persuade**. Each slide has a thumbnail, a purpose, three delivery steps, one question and, where useful, a facilitator tip.

Choose your session format

Format	Slide time	How to run it
Full workshop	6 h 35 min plus breaks	The source suggests a one-day workshop of about 6 to 7 hours. Full slide time is about that, so a full day with breaks is tight. Run the practice lab in parallel rooms or move the final challenge to a follow-up session.
Express	about 2 h 26 min	Core route marked "Express" on each slide. Run Scenario 1 only.
Self-paced follow-up	Flexible	Share the deck and guide. Participants complete the canvas, storyline, checklist and action plans in Sections 2, 3 and 8.

Timing by section

Section	Slides	Full	Express
1 The Foundations of Persuasive Presentations	1–9	35 min	14 min
2 Understanding Your Audience and Purpose	10–19	45 min	21 min
3 Structuring a Powerful Presentation	20–30	55 min	21 min
4 Designing Slides That Communicate	31–40	55 min	21 min
5 Delivery, Voice and Body Language	41–51	65 min	22 min
6 Storytelling, Evidence and Persuasion	52–61	55 min	23 min
7 Presentation Practice Lab	62–73	60 min	14 min
8 Personal Action Plan and Assessment	74–80	25 min	10 min
Total	**80**	**395 min**	**146 min**

Preparation checklist

- Print the Audience and Purpose Canvas (slide 19), the storyline page (slide 30), the Peer Evaluation Scorecard (slide 72) and the checklist and plans (slides 75 to 77) for every participant.

The Four Outcomes of a Presentation

Inform: help people understand

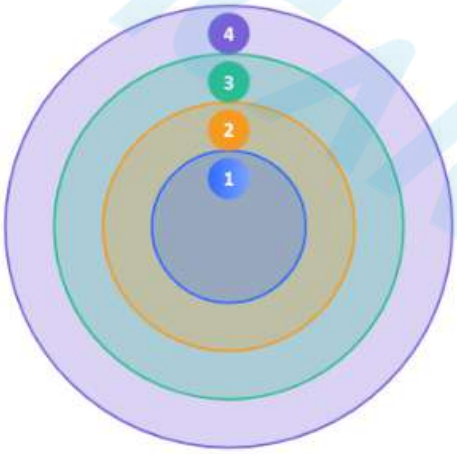
Explain: make a concept clear

Persuade: gain support for an idea

Mobilise: secure a decision or action

THE FOUNDATIONS OF PERSUASIVE PRESENTATIONS

The Audience Remembers What Matters



1. Attention is limited
2. Relevant messages are easier to retain
3. Clear structure reduces mental effort
4. Repetition reinforces important ideas

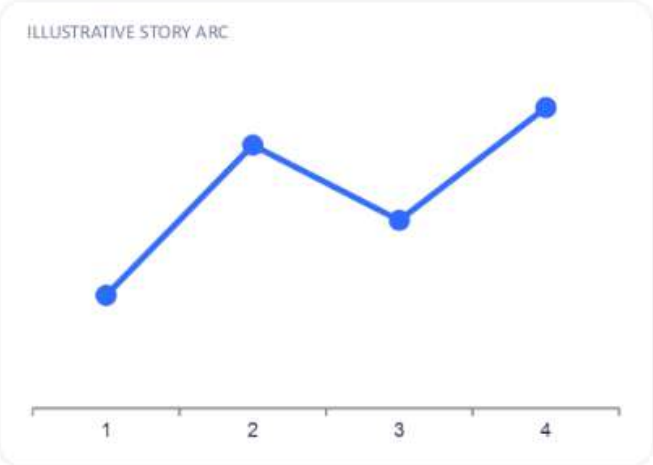
THE FOUNDATIONS OF PERSUASIVE PRESENTATIONS

The Persuasive Presentation Formula



BUILD FROM THE BOTTOM. RELEVANCE FIRST, ACTION LAST.

Situation–Complication–Resolution Structure



1. **Situation**
   Establish the current situation
2. **Complication**
   Introduce the challenge or change
3. **Resolution**
   Explain the recommended resolution
4. **Outcome**
   Show the expected outcome

STRUCTURING A POWERFUL PRESENTATION

The Three-Point Rule



- Group related ideas into three main messages
- Give each message a clear heading
- Support each point with relevant evidence
- Avoid creating too many competing priorities

STRUCTURING A POWERFUL PRESENTATION

Build Logical Transitions

THE IDEA

"That is the problem. Now, why does it matter?"

HOW TO DO IT

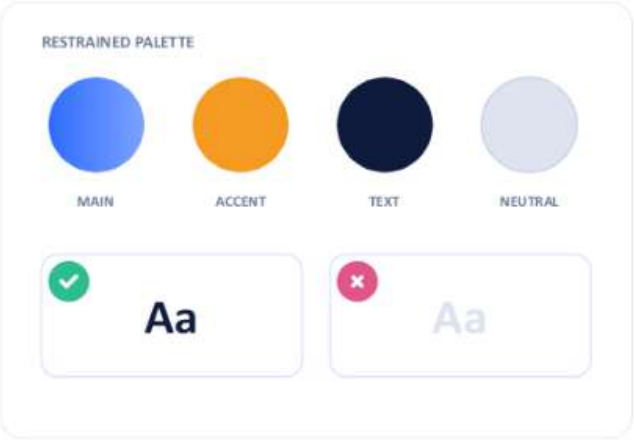
01 Connect each section to the central message

02 Explain why the next point matters

03 Use signposting phrases

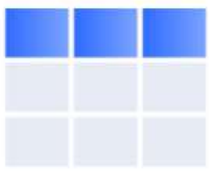
04 Avoid abrupt changes in direction

Colour and Visual Consistency



- Use a restrained colour palette
- Apply colours consistently
- Maintain strong text contrast
- Use emphasis only where it helps understanding

Choose the Right Visual



COMPARISON

Use a table



PROCESS

Use a flow diagram



CATEGORIES

Use grouped blocks

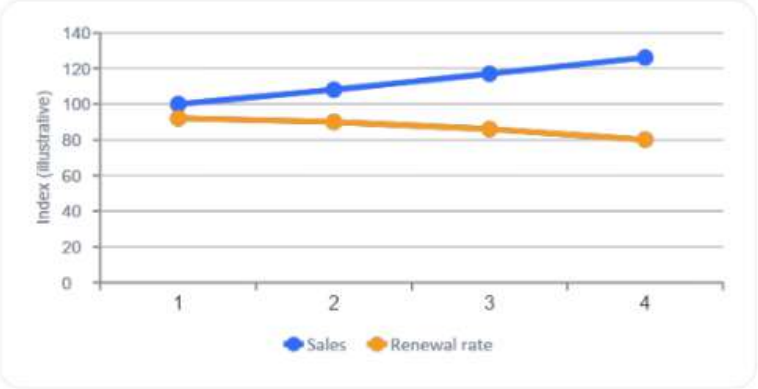


CHANGE OVER TIME

Use a suitable chart

Presenting Data Clearly

Sales grew, but renewal rates declined



- State the insight before showing the chart
- Label axes and units
- Highlight the relevant comparison
- Avoid decorative effects that obscure the data

Manage Questions and Interruptions

Listen to the complete question

01

Clarify if the question is unclear

02

Answer directly and briefly

03

Acknowledge when you need to verify information

04

DELIVERY, VOICE AND BODY LANGUAGE · ACTIVITY

Activity: The Two-Minute Delivery Drill

ACTIVITY

30 min

FORMAT

Pairs, two rounds

OUTPUT

One improvement applied

01 Deliver a short workplace message

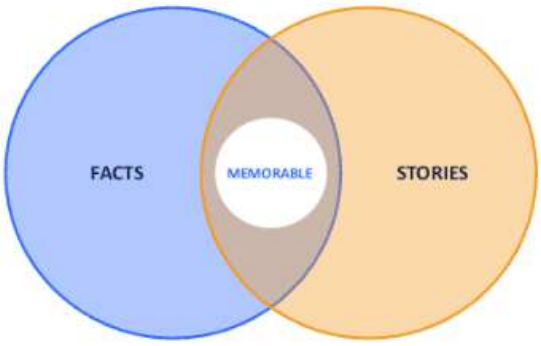
02 Practise pace, pauses and eye contact

03 Receive feedback from a partner

04 Repeat the presentation with one improvement

STORYTELLING, EVIDENCE AND PERSUASION

Why Stories Make Messages Memorable



EVIDENCE PLUS NARRATIVE

- Stories create context
- Examples make abstract ideas concrete
- A clear narrative helps people follow change
- Relevant stories connect evidence to human experience

Scenario 2: Present a Performance Update

THE SITUATION

- Results are below the expected target
- Several factors contributed to the gap
- Leadership needs a clear recovery plan

SCENARIO 2 · YOUR OBJECTIVE

Communicate the facts and secure support

Scenario 2: Build the Story

RESULT State the key performance result

DRIVERS Explain the main drivers of the gap

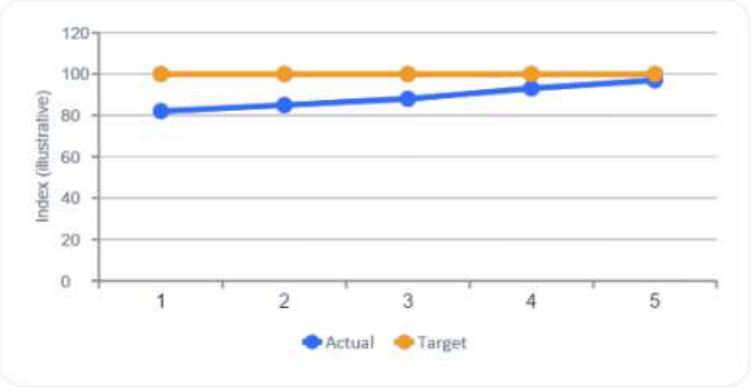
ACTIONS Identify corrective actions

SUPPORT Clarify decisions and resources required

FROM THE PROBLEM TO THE ACTION

Scenario 2: Deliver and Debrief

Results are behind target, but the recovery plan is clear



- Present the update in four minutes
- Use one clear chart or visual
- Explain the key insight
- End with specific actions and ownership