



INTENTIONAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT

Communication, Organization & Attention To Detail

ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED



60 minutes

OVERVIEW

This session highlights the value of developing skills related to communication, organization and attention to detail as necessary skills in preparing for post-service education and career opportunities. In this session, your service year corps members will explore different types of communication and their importance, while advancing practices that strengthen their ability to develop organizational and attention to detail skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES



By the end of this session, your corps members will be able to:

- Define communication
- Apply different communication strategies to different scenarios
- Identify the different types of communication
- Recognize the importance of attention to detail skills
- Demonstrate apply attention to detail practices to professional scenarios

TRAINING SESSION RESOURCES

Before getting started with this training session, you should review the Preparation section below as well as familiarize yourself with this guide's Session Script. This session should be presented directly to corps members using this downloadable presentation:

- **Downloadable Presentation:** [S5: Training Session: Communication, Organization, & Attention to Detail](#)

The downloadable presentation includes speaker notes for program staff who are facilitating this session directly to corps members, making it easy for staff to walk through the presentations efficiently and effectively.

PREPARATION

Trainer Expectations

Throughout this training session, trainers will be asked to facilitate the group through small group discussions and full group discussions. Some of the topics may feel challenging for your corps members to engage with, and they may not want to engage in conversations on these topics at first. Part of fostering a belonging environment is making the space equal with corps members and program staff. Therefore, we recommend you, as the facilitator, prepare responses to the questions posed to the corps members throughout the session as a strategy to help spark conversation if needed. Before beginning this session, review the Session Outline & Script below and ensure familiarity with the content to be prepared to facilitate activities and answer potential questions from corps members. You'll notice in the Session Outline there are resources linked to provide background on the subject matters included in this training.

	TIME ESTIMATE
	LEARNING OUTCOMES
	VIRTUAL MODIFICATION
	ACTIVITY
	HELPFUL TIP

Necessary Materials

- Prepare to have note cards, blank paper, and writing utensils.
- Hand out one note card to each participant before beginning the session.
- Your corps members should bring their journal to this session
- One printed copy for each corps member:
 - [S5: Resource: Back-to-Back Drawing](#)
 - [S5: Resource: Exit Ticket Brain Dump](#)
 - [S5: Resource: Communication](#)
 - [S5: Resource: Organization and Attention to Detail](#)
 - [S0: Resource: Glossary](#)

HELPFUL TIP

Your service year corps members will use their Employability Skills Inventory for this session and throughout the rest of the program year. Encourage them to keep it in a safe place or collect it each time they use it.

Virtual Modifications



If you plan to facilitate the training session in a virtual environment, we recommend the following modifications:

- Use a whiteboard that can be displayed on camera or share your screen and work in a word or google document
- If you have group break out sessions, set up the groups in advance via your video conferencing software
- Don't forget to send an email with any necessary handouts (see printed materials above) in advance of your remote session

SESSION OUTLINE

The following outline walks you through what to expect throughout this session and how to prepare.

I. Activity: Communication icebreaker - full group

II. Introduction to Communication

Prep needed: Review this [Communication 101 Resource](#) - content for today's session was adapted from it.

III. Activity: Can You Hear Me Now? - full group

Prep needed: You can use the examples in the Session Script, or make up your own (the game was adapted from this resource). Just be sure to stick with the rules (use only geometric terms), and do not reveal the subject of the drawing (bold print at the end of the description) until someone guesses it! Make sure everyone shows their drawing at the end. This should be quick, so watch your time!

Necessary materials: You will describe three things for your corps members to draw. They will need pen and paper.

IV. Activity: Listening - small groups

Prep required: Familiarize yourself with the activity in the Session Script below. You will split the corps into 2 groups of equal size into "listeners" and "talkers". If you do not have an even number of corps members, add more "listeners" than "talkers". You will give each group different instructions so make sure you have separated the groups so they can't hear your instructions.

V. Activity: Back to Back Drawing - small groups

Prep required: Familiarize yourself with the activity in the Session Script below on Slide #7. You will split corps members into pairs and each will have an opportunity to describe a geometric shape to their partner while they are back to back and their partner attempts to draw the image.

Necessary materials: Printouts of [S5: Resource: Back-to-Back Drawing](#) worksheets to distribute to each pair.

VI. Communication tips

You will introduce 5 effective communication skills that are especially important to focus on in a professional setting.

Prep required: These were adapted from [this resource](#) if you want to understand beyond what is provided in the script.

VII. Activity: "In so many words" - full group

VIII. Introduction to Attention to Detail

You will discuss the importance of attention to detail, especially in writing in a professional setting.

IX. Activity: Spot the Difference - full group

Prep required: Activity adapted from [this resource](#).

X. Activity: Exit Ticket "brain dump"

To close out, corps members will do a "brain dump" activity where they have two minutes to write down everything they remember from the session.

Necessary materials: [S5: Resource: Exit Ticket Brain Dump](#) should be provided to corps members

SESSION SCRIPT

The following script should be used for presenting this session directly to your corps members. It is recommended that you review this script before beginning the session. Italicized prompts are intended to be guidance for you as the trainer rather than part of the script you will communicate to your corps members.

Slide #1

Hi everyone! Welcome to our session. Today, we are going to do a deep dive into two of our employability skills: communication and organization & attention to detail.

Slide #2

Just to warm up, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not great and 10 being awesome – I want to know how good of a communicator you think you are. Take a piece of paper and fold it in half to make a tent. Write your rating on the tent card and place it in front of you. No judgment here, so please answer honestly.

Acknowledge how people have rated themselves before you move on. For example, "I'm seeing lots of high ratings – great! I look forward to hearing a lot from you today!" or "OK, I'm seeing a fair number of low ratings. Hopefully today's session will help you feel a little more confident and help you bring that number up!"



Have corps members use the chat in your webinar software.

Slide #3

Here is our agenda for the day: We will start by defining communication and then play a couple of quick communication games. Then, we will consider 5 types of communication and look at some tips for good interpersonal communication, in other words, speaking and listening.

We will then play another game that will help us focus on how to communicate concisely, which is very important in the workplace. We will then focus a bit on why attention to detail is important, especially in written communication. And finally, we will do a "brain dump" to end our time together.

I have a few housekeeping notes before we move on: This session is very interactive, so please try to turn off any other distractions. We have some fun things planned, so I think you'll find that it goes by very quickly, and hopefully you will get something useful out of it! You should have some paper and a pen or pencil to work with today. If you are keeping a paper journal, that will work fine, but just make sure you have something to write on and with because we will be doing a few exercises where you will need them, and it is also always a good idea to take notes.



Give corps members a few minutes to grab pen and paper. Ask them to have their cameras on so we can all get to know each other a little better. Sessions are always more fun when we can actually see each other!

Slide #4

It is often helpful to start with a definition. Communication can be defined as the act of giving, receiving, or exchanging information, ideas, and opinions so that the “message” is understood by both parties. Importantly, communication is said to be successful only when the sender and the receiver perceive the information in the same way.

Slide #5

Before the activity make sure each corps member has paper and something to write with.

With that definition in mind, let’s try some communication techniques! Get your paper and writing utensil ready. We are going to play a quick round of “Can You Hear Me Now?” It is a communication game that works like this: I will pick a random word and describe it using geometric terms such as directions, degrees, lengths, and shapes. Your job is to listen to the directions I give and do your best to draw what you hear. As we are drawing, you can shout out what you think the picture is at any time. After the correct guess, all of you will hold up your drawing so we can see them.

HELPFUL TIP

If you wish to gamify the activity, assign 1 point for the corps member who answers first. Inform corps members if you choose to assign points

Don’t worry! This game has nothing to do with how good an artist you are! We are not looking for perfect drawings – just an indication of what you heard in the instructions, okay? We’ll try 3 different drawings. Here we go!

You can use the examples below, or make up your own. Just be sure to stick with the rules (use only geometric terms), and do not reveal the subject of the drawing (bold print at the end of the description) until someone guesses it! Make sure everyone shows their drawing at the end. This should be quick, so watch your time!

Drawing Directions #1: Draw a large circle in the middle of the page. Draw a triangle at the top of the circle on the outside. Continue drawing triangles on the outside edge of the circle. **SUN**

Drawing Directions #2: Draw a rectangle in the middle of the page that is about 3x taller than it is wide. Draw a circle at the top of the rectangle. Draw three more circles that overlap with the first circle. Draw a crooked line on each side of the rectangle going outwards. **TREE**

Drawing Directions #3: Draw a half circle that is longer than it is wide, with the straight line at the top. Near the left side of the half circle, draw a long vertical line. Starting from the top of that line, draw another line 45 degrees down towards the half circle, stopping before you reach the circle. Connect that end point with the initial tall line. **BOAT**

What does this game tell us about communication? Did everyone’s drawing look the same? Why not?

Pause for answers.

When people hear things they often understand them differently – we are not machines! Our understanding of things is based on a given situation and our experiences in life. So, when we are communicating it is very important to understand that different people may understand what we are communicating in different ways. So, what can we do to help avoid misunderstandings?

Pause for answers.



Use the chat or ask corps members to get off of mute to share for virtual sessions.

Slide #6



We are going to do a second activity now on listening. I'm going to split you into two groups and will come talk to each group in a moment to explain the activity.

Split corps members into 2 groups of equal size – one group will be “listeners” and the other group will be “talkers” – but do not label these groups out loud. If you do not have an even number of corps members, add more “listeners” than “talkers.”

Privately, tell the “listeners” that they are instructed to stop listening to their partner after about 30 seconds, and to be open in showing their disinterest.

Tell the other group of “talkers” to think of something that they are passionate about and be prepared to tell their partner a meaningful or personally relevant short story about this topic.

Okay, now partner up with someone from the other group and follow the instructions I gave you. We'll come back together shortly.

Allow 1 minute for the groups to converse. Observe the behavior from the listeners and the reactions from the talkers until you're sure each speaker has picked up on what's happening. Stop the conversations at this point and explain the instructions that were given to each group.

Facilitate a group discussion on the importance of listening, how to use active listening, and what indicates that someone is truly listening. Ask the talkers group to share how they felt when their listener tuned out.



If virtual, we recommend you skip this slide and move on, given the complexity of this activity.

Slide #7



Let's split into pairs for this next activity. Once you're with your partner, sit back-to-back. The person whose name starts with a letter closest to A in the alphabet is the “drawer” ; the other person is the “speaker.”

Give one corps member (the “drawer”) a blank piece of paper and a pencil, and the other corps member (the “speaker”) the [Back-to-Back Drawing Worksheet](#).

When I say start, the “speaker” should describe the first image on your worksheet in detail. The “drawer” will attempt to draw what the speaker is describing on their blank piece of paper, based upon the instructions. Neither partner should be able to see the other's paper, and the drawer may not ask questions or communicate with the speaker.

Give corps members 2 minutes to draw the first image.

Swap places - the “drawer” is now the “speaker”, and vice versa. This time, the drawer can ask clarifying questions of the speaker throughout the activity.

Repeat the above directions, but this time the “drawer” can ask clarifying questions.



This game is called back-to-back drawing because if we were meeting in-person, that is how it would be played. We'll play it a little differently on Zoom or whichever video conferencing software you use, but it is the same basic idea. Send the corps members in pairs to breakout rooms and have them take turns with the same guidance given above.

Bring the group back together and ask them all to hold up their images from Round 1. Pick one pair to talk a little bit about their process.

How did it feel to do this activity? Was it confusing, fun, frustrating?

Pause for some discussion.

Then ask everyone to hold up their images from Round 2. Pick a different pair to share about their process.

Did it feel any different from the first round? Why or why not?

Pause for some discussion.

What do you think this game had to do with communication?

Pause for some discussion.

Among other things, this exercise challenges us to listen carefully and give clear, direct instructions.

Slide #8

Effective communication skills help you to receive and convey information, ideas, and messages in ways that are powerful and appropriate to the situation. There are lots of ways to communicate, but the 5 that are most important to focus on, especially in a professional setting, are: written, oral, non-verbal and visual, active listening, and contextual.

The first 2 may seem the most obvious:

- Written communication is conveying ideas and information through the use of written language.
- And oral communication is conveying ideas and information through the use of spoken language.

But equally important are the last three:

- Non-verbal and visual communication is conveying ideas and information through the use of imagery or wordless cues, such as body language.
- Active listening means communicating effectively by summarizing and restating what you hear in your own words in order to confirm the understanding of all parties. Active listening helps people to open up, avoid misunderstandings, resolve conflicts, and build trust.
- And finally, contextual communication, or communicating effectively in different contexts, including those pertaining to various populations, persons, situations, environments, or sets of behaviors. This includes such contexts as professional, cross-cultural, online, academic, and crisis communication. A simple way to understand contextual communication is to think of how you talk to your friends as opposed to your boss or your grandparents or your professor. These are probably all pretty different!

Slide #9

Interpersonal communication focuses on those last three types of communication: non-verbal and visual, active listening, and contextual communication. We'll break them down a little more for you, explain how these different elements of communication work, and provide some tips for improved interpersonal communication. They are broken into 2 categories – your actions and your words.

Your Actions:

- Avoid negative body language -- You can say a lot with your body language. This includes facial expressions, posture, gestures, and eye contact. Lack of eye contact, not directing your feet toward someone as they're speaking, and showing no change in facial expression are all indicators of disinterest.
- Use positive body language -- Conversely, your body language can also indicate interest. Things like leaning forward, nodding, eye contact, and fully directing your posture toward the person who is speaking denotes interest, attention, and even endearment.
- Actively listen -- Listening actively is connected to positive body language. However, active listening is a separate action. While body language is physical, active listening is a mental action. If you are already thinking of your response while the other person is talking, you are not actively listening.

Your Words:

- Avoid interruption -- Habitually interrupting while another person is speaking can send the message that you don't respect them or are not all that interested in what they have to say. You can send the opposite message by simply being more aware of interruptions and waiting for them to finish, all while actively listening.
- Repeat back -- Repeating something someone says like: "What I'm hearing you say is..." or "Basically you're saying that..." is another helpful communication tip. It is a good way to clarify what is being said and can also help avoid miscommunication.
- Ask questions -- Similarly, asking questions also indicates you're paying attention and value what a person is saying. Just be sure to ask relevant and thoughtful questions.

Slide #10

Now we are going to play a game called "In So Many Words!" Get your pen and paper ready. The important thing to remember for this game is when you give your answer it has to be clear enough that someone can follow your directions. You will see what I mean in a second.

Here we go: In 25 words or less, tell me how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich! Write down the instructions on your piece of paper. You have 4 minutes!

Set a timer. After 4 minutes, have some people read theirs out loud.

Now in 10 words or less, tell me how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich! You have 2 minutes!

Set a timer. After 2 minutes, have someone (different) read theirs out loud.

Last round, in 5 words or less, tell me how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich! You have 1 minute!

Set a timer. After 1 minute, have someone (different) read theirs out loud.

This activity helps teach us to be more brief and express points concisely. It can also show us how the meaning of messages can change or stay the same depending on the number of words used, and can help us decide how lengthy or brief to be when sending emails, delivering updates, or giving presentations.



After each prompt, have one corps member get off of mute to share.

Slide #11

We are now going to take a quick look at the importance of paying attention to details – especially in our written communications. Usually, when we are writing in a professional setting, whether it is an email, text, report, or presentation, we have the opportunity to edit ourselves and check for typos and grammar mistakes.

Most of our phones and computers are equipped with spelling and grammar checks, so it is easy to make sure we are presenting ourselves and our workplace in the best possible light. It is not only important to run checks to present yourself more professionally, but you can also completely change the meaning of what you are trying to say by not paying attention to how you are using punctuation. Let's look at some examples together.

Slide #12

Who can tell me the difference in meaning in these two examples?

Call on a volunteer or choose a corps member to provide their analysis.

Slide #13

Who's got this one? Try to call on someone different.

Slide #14

Okay, last one! What's the difference? Try to call on someone different.

Right! In this last scenario we end up as dinner! Obviously we are joking around a bit, but these scenarios really show us that if you move around or exclude a comma here and a period there it can change the meaning of what you are trying to say completely! So, the takeaway is, be mindful with respect to written communication or correspondence, especially when it's for your job or assignment.

Slide #15

Let's wrap up our discussion with any questions, comments, or thoughts you have about everything we discussed during today's session. Allow for this time to be an open discussion.



Use the chat or ask corps members to get off of mute to share for virtual sessions.

Slide #16



Thank you so much for your time, attention, and participation in today's workshop!

I am going to ask you to do one last activity. This is called a "brain dump." I will set the timer, and I want you to write everything you remember from today's workshop on the [Exit Ticket Brain Dump worksheet](#) that I shared at the beginning of the session. Don't worry about writing complete sentences - words, phrases, whatever comes to mind is great!

Set a timer for 2 minutes and tell them to start. At the end of 2 minutes, tell them to stop and if you have time, have a few people read their responses out loud. As time permits, ask if anyone has comments, questions, or concerns.



Have corps members unmute or use the chat box if there is time for group conversation. It is a good idea to save the chat so you can get an idea of what has stuck in people's minds or what you might want to focus on more with them in one-on-ones, etc.