

Care Skillsbase: Skills Check 25

Speaking Politely

Interviewer's pack

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Summary	
Suitable for	Senior Care Worker, Care Worker
Skill checked	Spoken communication
Covers	Language and concepts associated with politeness
Learning for interviewer	Can the member of staff discuss politeness with understanding?
Learning for member of staff	How to ask for clarification, give instructions, make requests and disagree politely.
Approx time needed	Total: 30 minutes (15 minutes for Skills Check and 15 minutes feedback)
How it works	Offers information and asks questions about being polite in different situations. Use it to develop a short discussion to check the person's spoken communication skills.
Notes	Some reading required. If person cannot read, read it to them.
Before you start	Read the general guidance in the Skills Check area of the Skillsbase website.

We welcome suggestions to improve this Skills Check. Please use the contact form on our website at www.scie-careskillsbase.org.uk

Understand the Job: Speaking Politely

Effective communication is vital in social care. Use this activity to learn more about the **communication skills** you will be using in your job.

First, write your name and today's date on the line below.

(First name)

(Last name)

(Date: Day-Month-Year)

1. Did you know?

Being polite is a way of showing respect. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect, all the time. That is why it is right to be polite to people at work and to expect them to be polite to you. Most of the time this is easy, but sometimes problems arise.

2. Two conversations

Look at these two conversations between a supervisor and a carer.

In both conversations the supervisor gives an instruction that the carer does not understand.

In conversation 1, the carer does not ask for an explanation.

In conversation 2, the carer does ask.

Conversation 1	Conversation 2
Supervisor: Mrs Tyler needs a chair today.	Supervisor: Mrs Tyler needs a chair today.
Carer: A what?	Carer: I'm sorry. I don't understand.
Supervisor: Use a chair to move Mrs Tyler, she's SOB today.	Supervisor: Use a chair to move Mrs Tyler, she's SOB today.
Carer: OK	Carer: I'm sorry. I still don't understand.
<i>Later that day, the supervisor wants to speak to the carer. Now the supervisor is angry.</i>	Supervisor: She needs a wheelchair.
Supervisor: You didn't use a chair to move Mrs Tyler. I told you she was SOB!	Carer: OK, now I understand. What is wrong with Mrs Tyler?
Carer: Sorry.	Supervisor: I told you, she's SOB. Sorry, S-O-B means 'short of breath'. She's having trouble breathing.
Supervisor: 'Sorry' isn't good enough. I'm going to talk to the manager about you!	Carer: Thank you for explaining. Now I know what 'SOB' means.

Why might a person say, 'OK', when they don't really understand?

What can staff do to avoid this sort of misunderstanding?

What can supervisors do to avoid it?

Understand the Job: Speaking Politely (continued)

3. Asking people what to do in a polite way

Care workers often have to ask people to do things.

Here are some examples.

Carer (washing a person): 'Give me your hand.'

Carer (feeding a person): 'Open your mouth.'

Carer (to family member): 'Come with me.'

How polite are these requests?

How would you make them sound more polite?

4. Saying what you want politely

Sometimes, what we want to say is not what other people want us to say. Usually, it is still possible to say what we want politely.

Look at these two situations.

Situation 1 In this situation a care worker wants to speak to a supervisor urgently.

Carer: May I speak to you?

Supervisor: Sorry, not now. I'm busy.

The carer still wants to speak to the supervisor. How can the carer say what they want politely?

Situation 2 In this situation, a care worker wants a supervisor to help someone.

Carer: I'm worried about Mrs Pitt. I've just seen her and she is hardly moving. I said hello but she didn't answer. She's much weaker than yesterday.

Supervisor: Stop fussing. She's fine.

The carer is still worried about Mrs Pitt. How can the carer say what they want politely?

5. Different ways of being polite

People from other cultures may have different ways of being polite.

Can you give any examples that you have noticed in your work with people from other cultures?

Feedback form	Date:			
Staff member's name				
Staff member's job title				
Interviewer's name				
Interviewer's job title				
1. Interviewer's view	The member of staff...	No	Partly	Yes
a. Used spoken communication effectively one-to-one.				
b. Understands what key words and ideas mean in relation to his/her work.				
2. Interviewer's reasons	The member of staff...	No	Partly	Yes
a. Expressed him/herself clearly, appropriately and with confidence.				
b. Showed understanding of specialist care words and ideas; was able to relate them to his/her own work (care knowledge).				
c. Spoke in a way that was easy to understand (pronunciation).				
d. Found the words s/he wanted, or explained effectively with other words (general vocabulary).				
e. Used clear, grammatically accurate language (grammar).				
f. Spoke at a normal pace, without long pauses, repetition or self-correction (fluency).				
g. Understood and responded appropriately to instructions and questions (listening).				
3. Next steps to help develop skills and knowledge for the job		Yes	No	
a. Interviewer will arrange monitoring, feedback and support from a supervisor.				
b. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve staff member's understanding of key social care words and ideas.				
c. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve staff member's spoken communication skills.				
4. Interviewer's signature	Staff member's signature			

Use the other side of this sheet for notes

Personal development form	Date:	
Staff member's name		
Staff member's job title		
Interviewer's name		
Interviewer's job title		
1. Learning aim: to work safely and meet quality standards, the member of staff should develop the following knowledge and skills		Tick (✓) if "yes"
a. Speaking and listening skills: to communicate clearly and with confidence on the job.		
b. Specialist care terms: to understand and relate key words and ideas to his/her job.		
English language skills (for staff from other countries)		
c. Pronunciation: to speak in a way that is easy for others to understand.		
d. General vocabulary: to be able to find the right words when talking.		
e. Grammar: to help express ideas in precise, accurate language.		
f. Fluency: to speak at a normal pace, without long pauses, repetition, self-correction.		
g. Listening comprehension: to understand questions, requests, instructions.		
2. How will the learning happen?		
3. What support and resources will be needed to make the learning successful?		
4. When will the learning happen?		
5. How will we know the learning has been successful?		
6. Progress review date		
7. Interviewer's signature	Staff member's signature	