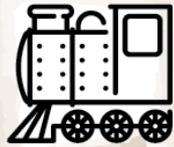


# PAST-TIMES



**Online Training**

# Module 1: Pedagogic Challenges

*Unit 1.1. Online learning and working in dynamic  
online environments*



# *Strategies and barriers of communication*

- ▣ To reach an effective communication, we need to focus on barriers and strategies.

# Barriers

- **Experiencing information overload** . Too much stimulation or information can make it very difficult to listen with full attention. Try to focus on the relevant information, and the central points that are being conveyed.
- **Criticizing the speaker** . Do not be distracted by critical evaluations of the speaker. Focus on what they are saying- the message- rather than the messenger.
- **Getting distracted by emotional noise** . We react emotionally to certain words, concepts and ideas, and to a myriad of other cues from speakers (appearance, non-verbal cues such as gestures, etc.). You also have verbal cues and body language.

- **Stereotyping and generalizing.** Do not to hold on to preconceptions about people or things. We often see what we want to see, forming an impression from a small amount of information or one experience, and assuming that to be highly representative of the whole person or situation.
- **Not investing time** . Making assumptions and ignoring details or circumstances can lead to misconceptions. We miss important details, and do not allow for the complexity of the situation. People need time to get to know teach other.
- **Having a distorted focus** . Focusing on the negative aspects of a conversation or a situation is a habit common to many people. Even though we may recognize the positive things, we often give more weight to the negative, allowing one negative comment to overshadow numerous positive ones.

- **Lacking clarity.** Avoid abstract, overly-formal language, colloquialisms and jargon.
- **Jumping to conclusions.** Do not assume you know the reasons behind events, or that certain facts necessarily have certain implications. Make sure you have all the information, and then speak about the facts versus the meanings or interpretations you attach to those.
- **Dysfunctional responses.** Ignoring or not responding to a comment or question quickly undermines effective communication. Likewise, responding with an irrelevant comment will quash genuine communication. Interrupting others also creates a poor environment.
- **Lacking confidence.** Lacking confidence can be a major barrier to effective communication. Shyness, difficulty being assertive, or low self-worth can hinder your ability to make your needs and opinions known. Not knowing your own rights and opportunities can prevent you from expressing your needs openly.

# Strategies

- **Stop.** Focus on the other person, their thoughts and feelings. Step away from your own concerns and give your full attention to the speaker.
- **Look.** Pay attention to non-verbal messages (video). Notice body language and non-verbal cues to allow for a richer understanding of the speaker's point.
- **Listen.** Listen for the essence of the speaker's thoughts: details, major ideas and their meanings. Seek an overall understanding of what the speaker is trying to communicate, rather than reacting to the individual words.
- **Be empathetic.** Imagine how you would feel in their circumstances. Be empathetic to the feelings of the speaker, while maintaining a calm centre within yourself. You need not be drawn into all of their problems or issues, as long as you acknowledge what they are experiencing.

- **Ask questions.** Use questions to clarify your understanding, as well as to demonstrate interest in what is being said.
- **Paraphrase.** If you don't have any specific questions to ask, you may choose to repeat back to the speaker, in your own words, what you have taken away, in order to allow the speaker to clarify any points ( Weger et al., 2010).
- **Analyse your own perceptions.** Question your perceptions and think about how they are formed. Check in with others around you regularly and be aware of assumptions that you are making. Seek additional information and observations.

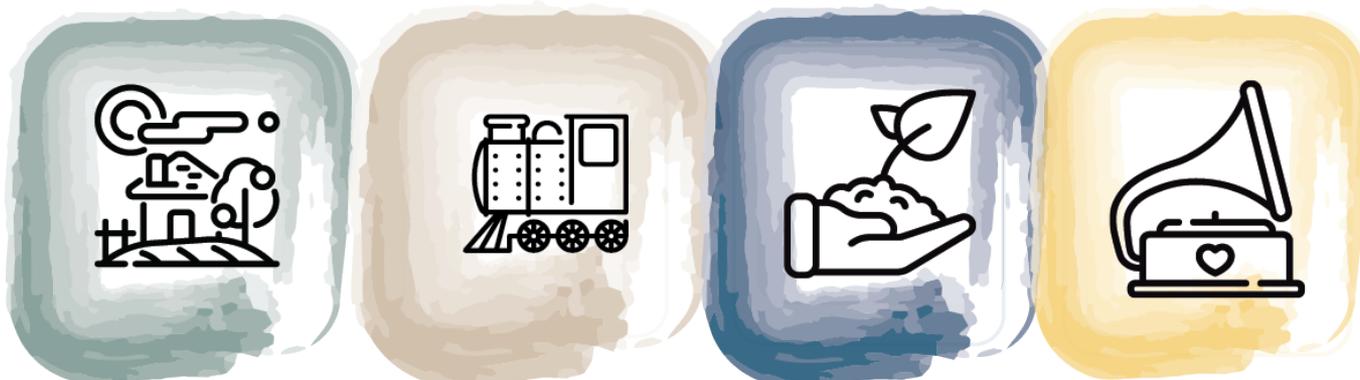
- **Work on improving your perception.** Increase your awareness of barriers to perception, and which ones you tend towards. Seek honest, constructive feedback from others.
- **Focus on others.** Develop your ability to focus on other people, and understand them better by trying to gather knowledge about them, listening to them actively, and imagining how you would feel in their situation.
- **Be genuine rather than manipulative.** Be yourself, honestly and openly. Be honest with yourself, and focus on working well with the people around you, and acting with integrity.
- **Be flexible towards others.** Allow for other points of view, and be open to other ways of doing things. Diversity brings creativity and innovation.
- **Value yourself and your own experiences.** Be firm about your own rights and needs. Undervaluing yourself encourages others to undervalue you, too. Offer your ideas and expect to be treated well.



Thank you for your  
attention



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