



Fundamentals of good communication: Questions to help with everyday communication

Getting ready to communicate

Am I ready to communicate with this child, family or foster carer?

How am I feeling? Am I attuned to how the person is feeling and what is happening in their life?

What is my relationship with this person? Do I know their story or family history?

How can I best prepare for this meeting? Who could help me to prepare?

What is the best way to meet this person? Should it be face-to-face or by phone?

Is the person expecting this meeting or conversation? When was I last in contact with them and how was it left?

Does the person need support when I am communicating with them?

Purpose of the communication

What is the purpose of this meeting or conversation?

Am I clear on why this meeting or conversation is taking place?

Am I clear on what I am hoping to achieve from this meeting or conversation?

Have I thought about what the potential impact of this conversation will be on the person?

Have I thought about what a good outcome from this meeting or conversation would be for the person that I am communicating with?

During communication

Am I aware of my verbal and non-verbal communication?

Have I clearly explained the purpose of the meeting or conversation to the person?

Am I respectful of the person and their needs? For example, if I was late, did I apologise?

Am I fully present and actively listening? If I am taking notes, have I explained why?

How is the information landing with the person? How are they reacting?

Am I aware of my tone of voice and do I ensure that it is open?

Do I have strategies to respond to the situation if it becomes challenging?

Checking understanding

Has my message been understood?

Have I given the person opportunities to ask questions during the meeting or conversation?

Have I checked in with the person to see if they are fully understanding the message?

Have I reflected back the points raised by the person to ensure that I have understood them as they intended?

Have I documented the points raised by the person during our meeting or conversation?

Have I arranged a date and a time for a follow-up meeting or conversation?

Seeking feedback

Have I looked for feedback on the meeting or conversation?

Have I supported the person to provide their feedback after the meeting and documented this feedback?

Have I addressed any questions, concerns or complaints in a timely way?

Have I clearly outlined the next steps, who is responsible for them and expected timelines?

Have I agreed to maintain regular contact with the person, even when there are no updates to give?

If the person needs support from other services, have I explained how I will follow-up with this?

Can I discuss any learning from this situation in my supervision?