

Roles and responsibilities of the design development team

Lines of communication: guidance notes

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Section 1

Introduction

In this activity, learners look at the roles and interaction of design and construction personnel. Learners explore the types of communication that take place between the design and construction team through a simulation or role play activity.

The resource uses a traditional model of contractual procedures. Learners should be aware that there are other design and contracting arrangements, for example, 'design and build' contractors, and that some employers utilise multi-tasking professionals.

You will be using a range of teaching and learning approaches, but there is a particular focus on learners:

- making requests and asking questions
- improving and reflecting on discussion skills
- using experiential learning through role play
- reflecting on their learning and skills.

Make the learners aware that they are developing their personal and learning skills as well as gaining new knowledge. This helps them to become more 'expert' learners.

Learning objectives

Vocational objectives

- Explore the types of communication that take place between the design and construction team.

Literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) objectives

- SLc/L2.3 Express clearly statements of fact, explanations, instructions, accounts and descriptions using appropriate structure, style and vocabulary.
- SLc/L2.2 Make requests and ask questions to obtain detailed information in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Learning outcomes

When they have completed the activity, learners should:

- understand the lines of communication between those involved in the construction design process
- be aware of the personal, learning and thinking skills they are using.

Learning outcomes for teachers

After completing these activities teachers should be able to:

- understand the importance of embedding LLN into vocational learning
- facilitate active learning activities
- understand the importance of giving specific and timely feedback
- reflect on and evaluate the teaching and learning experiences in the activities
- encourage learners to talk about their learning experience and learning skills.

Resources required

- Roles and responsibilities card sort.
- Role play scenario cards.

Starting points

Learners will need discussion skills at Level 1. The activity aims to move learners on to discussion and listening skills at Level 2. The learners will be asked to read a document that they have found to pick out the main points which is also a Level 1 task. They will build to Levels 2 and 3 by synthesising and presenting information in their own words, both verbally and in writing.

Suggested approaches (Indicative timing: 45 minutes)

Stage 1 (Indicative timing: 30 minutes)

Give groups one of the scenarios outlined on Learner sheets 1, 2 and 3. Allocate each of the learners in the group a role, and give them the related responsibility and sustainability card. Encourage learners to read through the scenario, identify any vocabulary that is new to them, find out the meaning and update their glossaries.

Learners should then discuss with a partner the part their role plays in the chosen scenario. Some questions to prompt their discussion have been included on Learner sheets 1, 2 and 3. They could also discuss their attitude to the proposed change outlined on these sheets, for example, whether they are for or against it. They should record this on their sheets as it will be needed for the next activity.

After learners have had time to become familiar with their role, responsibilities and scenario, create a circle of learners within each group. Using the chosen scenario learners decide who needs to speak to whom to resolve the situation appropriately.

Ask learners who should start this process of communication; give that person a ball of string.

This person asks a question or requests an action from another member of the group. Holding on to the end of the string, the ball is unravelled and given to the second person. That person then repeats the process.

As the communication passes to the next role, the ball of string is unravelled, reflecting where the conversation is moving to, while the tail of the string is held by the previous role, representing where the conversation has come from. A video of this approach being used is included with these resources.

Although three scenarios have been provided for use with this activity on Learner sheets 1 to 3, you may prefer to work with your learners to create your own scenarios.

Reflect on learning

This learning activity includes many different opportunities to develop LLN skills. Ask learners to self-assess their skills using the Learner reflection sheet in Section 2.

Alternative approach

During the piloting of these resources, teachers at one centre created a background board for their learners to show the lines of communication. This has been included at the back of this pack as Learner sheet 4. The sheet was printed,

laminated and fixed to a thin board material. Pins or hooks were then pushed into the board at the top of each job role title to act as communication nodes. Learners undertook the roles and responsibilities card sort activity and were then asked to complete a communication exercise similar to the one above. Instead of role playing the communication, learners were given a set of rubber bands which they fixed between the hooks to represent a line of communication between two or more of the personnel involved in a particular scenario.



A learner who used this activity said:

“It was easy to see who spoke to who and we worked out why. I didn’t really understand how this worked before I did this.”

Extension activities

This activity could be extended to deepen or broaden your learners’ understanding of the topic in any of the following ways.

Identifying the type of communication used

The lines of communication activity can be extended by attaching a paper note with a peg to the piece of string as each exchange takes place. Write down types of communication used: verbal instructions, written orders and other formal documents.

Creating additional scenarios

In small groups learners can identify additional scenarios. This would be particularly relevant if your learners are familiar with any real site situations. Through group discussion, select one or more scenarios to be used in additional role plays.

Creating additional roles

Ask learners to create additional role and responsibility cards in the same format as those supplied. These could be specific to their roles or a group of personnel particularly relevant to your curriculum needs. You could work with other teaching colleagues in your institution or across your network group to create a range of new role cards.

Learner Sheet 1

Scenario one

A construction project is currently underway in the centre of a rural town. The work consists of the conversion of a former workshop into a three-bedroom chalet bungalow. Obtaining consent to change the use of this former commercial building to a residential property has involved a lot of negotiation as the building needs to retain its original character to blend into the existing buildings in this picturesque town.

The client has decided that they would like to change the design of the forward facing dormer roof windows from the planned and accepted timber and tiled roof to one which is constructed entirely of glass.

What is your role?

How will you be involved?

Who needs to start this process of communication?

Who will they speak to?

Which other roles will be involved in these communications? Put them in order.

Who?	Why?	What type of communication?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Learner Sheet 2

Scenario two

During a large refurbishment of 50 local authority houses, the clerk of works, acting on behalf of the client, has identified a problem with the materials being used. All of the materials being used meet the specified quality standards but the sourcing for the materials does not meet the contractual clause that requires that materials must be manufactured within a 200 mile radius of the site.

What is your role?

How will you be involved?

Who needs to start this process of communication?

Who will they speak to?

Which other roles will be involved in these communications? Put them in order.

Who?	Why?	What type of communication?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Learner Sheet 3 Scenario three

A small guttering and fascia board replacement contractor has been contracted to replace the second storey gutters on a commercial building. The client has, however, asked the contractor if they could possibly reduce the cost of the project by working off ladders instead of the expensive scaffold that has been quoted for. The client has also found some cheaper guttering on the internet from a non-UK supplier that will further reduce the cost.

What is your role?

How will you be involved?

Who needs to start this process of communication?

Who will they speak to?

Which other roles will be involved in these communications? Put them in order.

Who?	Why?	What type of communication?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Learner Sheet 3.4



Client

Surveyor

Subcontractor

Building contractor

Clerk of works

Architect

Suppliers and
builders' merchants

Specialist engineers

Chief planning officer

Health and safety
inspector

Section 2

Learner reflection sheet

How are my discussion and learning skills?

Name.....

Date.....

Activity 3: Lines of communication

	Skill When I was taking part in the role play did I:	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
SLc/L2.3	express clearly what I wanted to say?			
	use the correct vocabulary?			
	make sure that my points were logical?			
	look at other people when I spoke?			
	ensure other people understood what I was saying?			
SLc/L2.2	word any questions clearly, so that other people could understand?			

What action can I take to improve my skills?

Learning approaches How good am I at:	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
working individually?			
contributing to group work?			
listening to other people?			
making helpful suggestions to other learners?			
accepting suggestions about how to improve your work?			
giving clear verbal explanations?			
asking clear questions?			
making notes that use key words?			

I learn best by:

I find it difficult to learn when:

I could improve my learning by:

Next time I will:

Teacher reflection sheet

How confident am I to embed LLN?

Was I able to help learners to:

I do this well

I'm okay at this

I need to work on this

- SLc/
L2.3
- value the development of LLN by making them aware of the skills they were using at different stages of the activity?
 - complete the self assessment of their LLN skills after each activity?
 - express clearly what they wanted to say?
 - use the correct vocabulary?
 - make sure that their points were logical?
 - look at other people when they spoke?

How confident am I to use a range of active teaching and learning approaches?

What would help me to embed LLN into my teaching?

I do this well

I'm okay at this

I need to work on this

Show the learners that I value the work on LLN.

Liaise with LLN or maths specialists.

Work with a Subject Learning Coach.

Work with other people who are teaching my subject to plan how to embed LLN.

Have knowledge of the LLN core curriculum.

Look at the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy research which shows how other teachers have done it.

Attend a staff development session on LLN.

Participate in a Skills for Life project that is focusing on embedding.

I will improve my embedding of LLN in my teaching by:

You may wish to read Section 3 before doing this self assessment.

Teaching and learning approaches or activities Do I:	I do this well	I'm okay at this	I need to work on this
use vocationally relevant examples?			
use graduated tasks?			
use role play?			
encourage learners to reflect on the development of their personal, learning and thinking skills?			

My key improvement targets are:

Section 3

Guidance on teaching and learning approaches

Literacy, language and numeracy (LLN)

Recent research has found that programmes that embed LLN lead to a 16% improvement in retention and achievement of vocational qualifications (Helen Casey et al, 2006).

In these activities, learners will have the opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills. Tell learners about the skill(s) to be developed in each activity and give specific guidance on how to improve. The notes on each activity help you to do this. Ask learners to self-assess their performance using the grid in Sheet 4.1. They can also set their own targets for improvement. Focus on developing one or two skills at a time and review these on a regular basis. Your LLN specialist will also be able to advise you on other strategies and approaches.

Always try to find naturally occurring opportunities to work on LLN, where learners can immediately appreciate the relevance and importance of the skills they are learning to use.

As part of your continuing professional development (CPD) you can evaluate your own confidence to embed LLN into your teaching. Use the Teacher reflection sheet to do this and create an action plan for improvement. This could be done with your Subject Learning Coach or with the help of your LLN specialist.

Glossary

The glossary is a feature of all the materials developed for Construction and the built environment in this phase. We have included a glossary that you can adapt. A range of technical terminology is used both for the design and development of a construction project and for the personnel involved. You can work with learners to develop personalised glossaries. Value the glossary by reviewing it on a regular basis. You may also want to refer learners to the following websites to help them in developing their glossaries:

<http://www.esd.rgs.org/glossarypopup.html>

<http://www.greenconstruction.co.uk/glossary/default.asp>

Planning learning in multiple environments

In these activities learners can use their experience from visits to construction sites and their own general knowledge. You may want to encourage them to undertake internet research in preparation for, or as an extension of, these activities.

A visit to a construction project or architect's office or a guest speaker from one of the professionals identified in this activity would make the learning experience more meaningful.

Co-operative learning

Most of the activities use co-operative learning. Learners work in pairs and groups. The teacher acts as the facilitator.

By allowing learners to explore information and to seek for meaning, a deeper and more lasting learning takes place. Co-operative learning has been found to improve information acquisition, higher-level thinking skills, interpersonal and communication skills.

The co-operative learning techniques used in this series of activities are:

- agreeing ground rules
- team discussion
- explanations by teams
- asking and answering questions.

Think carefully about pairing and grouping learners. For example, place those with reading difficulties with those who are more proficient.

Experiential learning

Some of the learner activities in this resource are experiential, in particular the role play. Learners are engaged in work-related experiences that allow them to make discoveries and to experiment. They can construct meaning and develop their understanding. Experiential learning leads to affective (feeling) as well as cognitive (thinking) learning. It can be a powerful approach for developing empathy and changing attitudes.

Multi-sensory learning

The learner activities in these resources use multi-sensory learning. By designing a learning experience where learners use more than one of their senses, we make it richer and more motivating. The learner is more likely to remember after a multi-sensory experience

Learners are engaged by using interactive resources and other media including:

- written scenarios
- cards with roles and responsibilities
- a ball of string to represent the line of communication

Reflect on the teaching and learning approaches used in this activity

You can use the Teacher reflection sheet to reflect on the teaching skills you have used in this activity. This can contribute to the development of your skills within the

framework of the new overarching professional standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector.

The new professional standards can be downloaded from the Lifelong Learning (LLUK) website, www.lifelonglearninguk.org/standards/new_prof_standards.html.

The Institute for Learning website, www.ifl.ac.uk, can provide:

- a description of the CPD process
- a place for teachers to keep a record of their activities and achievements.

The joint Training and Development Agency for Schools/Lifelong Learning UK website supporting the workforce delivering diplomas, www.teach14-19.org can provide an online interactive training needs analysis for teachers of Diplomas.

You could use the Teacher reflection sheet when planning, or after using the activities in these resources. This enables you to clearly identify areas in which you may need development and, using the instruments outlined above, plan and record the development of these skills.

If you have adapted these resources and used different approaches you can edit the Teacher reflection sheet accordingly. You should undertake this reflection and development with your Subject Learning Coach or another colleague and encourage your learners to give you feedback on the use of the approaches and the development of your skills.

Bibliography

Casey, Helen, et al (2006) *“You wouldn’t expect a maths teacher to teach plastering...” Embedding literacy, language and numeracy in post-16 vocational programmes – the impact on learning and achievement*. NRDC, London.