



Training Fiche

Title	Effective communication in the digital environment	
Keywords	Digital communication, digital environment, communication problems, digital era, communication skills, soft skills	
Provided by	Internet Web Solutions	
Language	English	
Objectives	In this module we will focus on how to improve digital communication, by developing the necessary skills that will help to boost effective digital communication in the work environment, which is of great importance for teamwork and coordination with others, the professional development of the individual, their personal enrichment, as well as to have an attractive, productive and enjoyable work experience, and in turn, adapt to the new circumstances and work challenges in which we live.	
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire basic knowledge about digital communication and its current context. • Identify the main communication problems in the digital era. • Enhance communication skills in the digital environment. From a management perspective, towards an employee/work team perspective. A practical guide to boost effective communication in the work environment. 	
Training Area	Complex problem solving	
	Critical thinking	
	Creativity	
	People management	
	Coordinating with others	X
	Emotional intelligence	
	Judgement and decision-making	
	Service orientation	
	Negotiation	
	Cognitive flexibility	



Content index	Course 1: Effective communication in the digital environment. Unit 1: Communication in the digital environment. The new communication. Unit 2: Main communication problems in digital era. Unit 3: Boosting your communication skills in the digital environment. A practical guide.
Content development	Course 1: Effective communication in the digital environment Unit 1: Communication in the digital environment. The new communication. The spread in the use of the Internet over the last few decades has brought about profound changes in the way we communicate. Most of us may know by now that digital communication is any type of communication that is based on the use of technology. There are many channels and forms of digital communication. In the workplace, which is what we will focus on in this module, it can range from sending an email, having a chat conversation with your work team, or having an online professional meeting through some platform, among others. But do we know how to have effective digital communication in the workplace and how to get the most out of it? In this module we will focus on how to improve digital communication and thus coordination with others, by developing the necessary skills that will help drive effective digital communication in the work environment. Currently, after the COVID-19 crisis, the digitalization processes of companies have accelerated, which has led to the establishment of new remote working methodologies, encompassed in the new term called Smartworking, in which work teams become virtual. Therefore, it should be noted that this type of digital communication is nowadays the new norm, in which in addition to the knowledge of certain skills and digital tools, we must learn the codes of conduct of communication in the current digital environment, and work on our soft communication skills, to achieve effective communication, which is basic for teamwork and coordination with others, the professional development of the individual, as well as to have an attractive, productive and enjoyable work experience, and in turn adapt to the new circumstances and labour challenges in which we live.

To achieve the above objectives, it is valuable to know that digital communication has inherent characteristics, advantages and disadvantages compared to the face-to-face communication to which we have long been accustomed. Digital communication is faster, interactive, decentralized, more participatory, less hierarchical. Above all, it allows us to interact immediately, eliminating the physical barriers that could condition us before. One of its particular characteristics is that it is not usually accompanied by the non-verbal language that accompanies traditional communication, which poses new paradigms.

According to these characteristics, let's see in the following unit, what are the most common problems that can arise through digital communication in the workplace.

Unit 2:

Main communication problems in digital era.

Communication barriers are those that prevent a free, clear and effective transmission of information or message. Let's see in the digital work environment, what are the most common problems that we can find in our team.

- **Cooling of interpersonal relationships in the virtual work team:** The lack of contact in virtual work or digital communication can lead to feelings of isolation, loneliness and cooling of team relationships, which can have a negative impact on the individual, affecting their well-being, productivity and the work environment itself.
- **Problems in the interpretation of the message:** The digital message is easy to misinterpret. Through this medium, the non-verbal signals of communication, such as tone of voice, emphasis, hand gestures, facial tone, body position, etc., which usually accompany the interpretation of the information, are not seen. This can lead to a misinterpretation of messages or information, in which we end up giving a subjective or personal interpretation of the receiver (based on his emotional state. We hear and see what we emotionally tune in), losing the initial effectiveness or objectivity of the message.
- **It creates a false security / coldness:** For many people, the physical distance of digital communication creates a sense of "false security", which face-to-face communication does not provide, and makes them feel safer, as if digital communication were not "real", and they can manifest a more "aggressive" behaviour or a certain lack of caution in communication, shielded by the medium and the distance. It is

easier for them to express themselves through this type of medium than when we have to look someone in the eye and share our feelings or opinions.

- **The immediacy / instantaneousness of the message:** The perspective of instant communication creates an additional pressure to compensate presentiality, which can often lead to write quickly, answer quickly, which can transform what should be a thoughtful response, in a reaction, which can lead in turn to recklessness, more difficult to remedy by the intrinsic characteristics of the digital medium.
- **The persistence of the message or digital fingerprint:** The digital medium, in addition to having multiple advantages, has the particularity of remaining in the electronic medium, this means that the messages we send, or the conversations we have, etc., remain reflected in the medium and will remain in the digital support, unlike traditional communication, which we could say is more "ephemeral".
- **Use of vocabulary with certain meanings:** Languages, technical terms, anglicisms, colloquial language, symbols with more than one meaning, poor expression, etc., which the receiver, for different reasons, may interpret them differently or not understand them at all, which leads to a distortion of the message we receive or that we intended to convey.
- **Lack of clarity in the instructions and objectives:** The clarity of information and guidelines in the digital environment is of utmost importance. This is what will enable the team to follow them properly and achieve the proposed objectives.
- **No knowledge of the work being done by others:** Many times, we do not have the appropriate tools for this purpose. This feeling can also be due to the lack of physical presence to which we are so used to, and the coexistence in a new environment in which the presence is virtual.
- **Lack of responsibility and autonomy:** Autonomous time management and self-sufficiency are essential for performance in today's digital work environments, a factor that in turn influences coordination with the rest of the team.
- **Misunderstandings within multicultural teams:** One factor to take into account is the message in multicultural digital environments, in which not everyone has the same interpretative codes or communicative behaviour. Hence the need to work on the effective digital message, assertive, and adapted to the medium and the environment.
- **Lack of feedback:** Feedback in the digital work environment

helps the fluidity and synergy of communication, in this medium it is essential to maintain an exchange of information that keeps us always up to date, and in which it is known that our information is being received, read and understood.

- **Lack of a generalized digital language established:** Digital language is very recent compared to the history of traditional language that we all know and have learned. For this new digital language, there is still no common formal basis established that we can all follow and interpret according to a common standard, which can lead to different interpretations.

Unit 3:

Boosting your communication skills in the digital environment. A practical guide.

As we have seen above, virtual work teams are exposed to a number of difficulties that often slow down the work and prevent proper progress. To prevent these inconveniences from affecting the work team, its projects and objectives, it is important to design strategies in order to know how to overcome them.

Assertive communication in the digital workplace is of vital importance for the achievement of professional objectives both individually and as part of a team, and in all areas of business communication, from management to communication between employees or with customers.

Assertive communication is effective communication, which through coherence, respect for oneself and others, understanding, active listening, honesty and clarity, gets the message across in the most effective and practical way possible. This type of skill, indispensable in the work environment, has an impact on improving professional performance, as well as on the personal well-being of the individual.

Let's see the basic steps for an assertive communication:

- Active listening, and encouraging participation in a bidirectional way.
- Identify the barriers that hinder communication both individually and in the work team.
- Breaking down the identified barriers to improve communication.
- Create individual and group strategies to prevent the identified communication problems.

Knowing the basics of assertive communication, let's now look at some tips to improve our communication skills, in the **Practical Guide to Improve Communication in the Digital Environment:**

- Management perspective:

- Humanize the virtual environment.
- Open reliable communication channels in the virtual environment and teach your team how to use these channels for their own benefit.
- Strengthen motivation and trust in the work team.
- Activates synergy among team members.
- Strengthens autonomy and empowerment in the team.
- Educates and trains the virtual team so that everyone knows their duties and responsibilities, enabling them to improve the quality of their work.
- Use reliable and appropriate tools for your work environment and your team. This will help to maintain a greater sense of community, and to carry out increasingly efficient processes.
- Perform a feedback process to accompany and enrich everyone's work.
- Establish and set meeting schedules and their duration in advance, so that there are no communication setbacks among the team and everyone is prepared and available for this purpose.
- Implement clear working conditions and modifications designed only for your virtual team.
- Encourage work through virtual events and meetings.
- Organize activities based on common interests, to boost motivation and communication within the team.
- Keep attention spans in mind. The attention span in communication is limited, and more so in the digital environment. That's why in this environment, being concise is key.
- Virtual meetings, just like physical meetings, need to be quick, effective, concise and operational.
- If you are the leader of a meeting, you must make sure you are a good mediator, and give the floor to all team members, so that no one feels excluded.

- Employee/work team perspective:

- Count on the most effective and appropriate digital tools for communication in your work environment.
 - Be curious, find out and train yourself in the tools you do not know how to use.
- Choose the right channel for each occasion. This will improve your digital interactions.
 - Sometimes you will consider using a channel such as chat

for more instant messages, email for more formal communications, and sometimes online video support for a more detailed conversation, supported by the facial expressions and body language provided by the image.

- Avoid using e-mail or chat in conflict situations, and opt for means such as telephone or videoconferencing that convey closeness. Also, try not to copy people unnecessarily, or use capital letters if it is not to give a positive connotation to the message.
- Construct your message in a clear and concise manner, do not take anything for granted.
 - Avoid ambiguous expressions, and put yourself in the receiver's shoes, adapting yourself to the communication channel you are using.
- "The best communicators are almost always the best listeners". That is why it is very important to practice active listening if we want to convey a message.
 - If the message is not understood, the responsibility must fall on the sender, not on the receiver.
- Always interpret messages/information from a professional point of view.
- Take care of your online reputation, which means your behaviour on social networks and online platforms.
- Always give feedback and be open to receive it. This will help in a smooth, effective and safe feedback among the team, in which we all work according to our strengths and weaknesses.
- In multicultural work environments, remember that not everyone has the same codes. Tailor your message in a professional manner and adapt it to the environment and target audience.
- Join the corporate culture of your work environment. Be collaborative and appreciative of your team to foster a pleasant work environment and encourage peer support.
- Ask for clarification when you don't understand something. This will help fluid communication with your team and establish the same synergy within your company's community.
- Get to know your colleagues. In remote work, or Smartworking provided by the digital environment, it is essential that employees can get to know each other, to feel

integrated into the community and valued.

- Meet with your colleagues in person, you can carry out some activity or meeting in which you can spend a pleasant time together.
- Take care of the way you communicate the message or the information itself and adapt it to the environment.
 - Take care of the use of writing in written messages, and the diction, the tone of your voice, and your body language, in video or audio interactions.
- Try to reduce the noise in the communication. This can be environmental noise in a video call, constant interruptions, interferences, technical problems, among others.
 - Make good use of the microphone in videoconferences. If you are not going to intervene, mute the microphone to reduce noise. This way, when you turn it on, it will be understood that you want to contribute something.
- When carrying out these videoconferences, it is also important to consider:
 - That our gaze is directed towards the camera in order to better attract the attention of the receivers.
 - Take care of the body language, as we have mentioned, it is key to transmit the message we want. It is recommended to choose a medium shot, in which the face and arms can be seen.
 - Choose a space or background that does not distract the attention of the receivers, and that conveys professionalism.
 - Good lighting is also key to not losing the attention of the receivers.
 - Take care of your digital image. Digital presence has become as important as face-to-face presence. It is recommended, for example, that you dress comfortably and professionally during video calls. Consider that your image is in line with your professional performance, your objectives, and the impression you want to make.

Digital tools are designed also to help you for these purposes. Work on your communication skills on a daily basis, and you will see improvements in teamwork, coordination and understanding with the people around you.



Glossary	<p>Communication: The action of successfully transmitting information or a message to a receiver through a channel shared with the sender and in a code or language understood by the parties involved in the process.</p> <p>Digital communication: Communication that takes place through the digital medium, through the use of technology.</p> <p>Digital support: Means through which information is communicated or stored in an electronic format.</p> <p>Smartworking: Work methodology based on mobility, flexibility, employee autonomy, teamwork and collaboration, and the use of new technologies, within an "agile" work methodology.</p> <p>Virtual work team: A work team consisting of a group of people working towards a common goal, but whose individuals are not physically together.</p> <p>Noise in communication: In communication, any unwanted signal that is mixed with the useful signal to be transmitted is called noise.</p> <p>Communication skills: These are a set of abilities possessed by the individual, which can be developed throughout life, with the aim of enabling the individual to communicate more efficiently, and thus enhance their social relationships.</p>
Self-evaluation (multiple choice queries and answers)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Point out the characteristics associated with digital communication<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) it is faster, interactive, decentralized, more participatory, less hierarchicalb) it allows us to interact immediately, eliminating the physical barriers that could condition us beforec) none of the above is correct2. Point out one of its particular characteristics<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) it is not usually accompanied by the non-verbal language that accompanies traditional communication, which poses new paradigms.b) it is always accompanied by non-verbal language, which helps the interpretation of digital messages, being of basic importance for this purpose.3. Digital communication, today is the new standard. For effective digital communication:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) It is only necessary to have knowledge and skills about digital tools, which is what the topic is about.b) In addition to digital knowledge and skills, we must learn the codes of conduct of communication in today's digital environment, and work on our soft communication skills.

c) We should only work on our soft communication skills, since digital knowledge and skills do not affect the way I communicate, nor the way I work in a team. If I know very well what I want to convey, the rest is not important.

4. What are communication barriers?

- a) In communication there are no barriers, that is why it is a method that reaches everyone.
- b) are those that prevent a free, clear and effective transmission of the information or message.
- c) Neither of the two is correct, the term communication barriers do not even exist.

5. In the digital work environment, what are the most common problems we may encounter in our team? Mention at least 4 options.

- a) Cooling of interpersonal relationships in the virtual work team.
- b) Problems in the interpretation of the message.
- c) Misunderstandings within multicultural teams.
- d) Lack of feedback.

6. "Autonomous time management and self-sufficiency are essential for performance in today's digital work environments, a factor that in turn influences coordination with the rest of the team." Select whether this description corresponds to any of the following statements:

- a) Lack of responsibility and autonomy.
- b) No knowledge of the work being done by others.
- c) None of the above is correct. This topic is not included in the training module.

7. Select the correct option according to the following description:

"Digital language is very recent compared to the history of traditional language that we all know and have learned. For this new digital language, there is still no common formal basis established that we can all follow and interpret according to a common standard, which can lead to different interpretations."

- a) True
- b) False

8. What is assertive communication?

- a) It is effective communication, which, through coherence, respect for oneself and others, understanding, active listening, honesty, and clarity, gets the message across in



	<p>the most effective and practical way possible.</p> <p>b) It is the communication that in turn takes into account all the departments of a company, also known as "corporate communication". Like all types of communication, through training and development of this skill, more effective results can be achieved in the team.</p> <p>9. Mention the correct examples to improve our communication skills in the digital environment, from a management perspective.</p> <p>a) Perform a feedback process to accompany and enrich everyone's work.</p> <p>b) Focus only on the results of the team, feedback is only necessary at specific times, as when requested.</p> <p>c) Virtual meetings, just like physical meetings, must be quick, effective, concise and operational.</p> <p>d) Open reliable communication channels in the virtual environment. All team members in the digital era should already know how such platforms work.</p> <p>10. Mention the correct examples to improve our communication skills in the digital media, from an employee/work team perspective:</p> <p>a) Construct your message in a clear and concise manner, do not take anything for granted.</p> <p>b) Your colleagues are highly qualified, do not underestimate them, they will always understand what you mean.</p> <p>c) Always interpret messages/information from a professional point of view.</p> <p>d) Interpret messages/information from a personal point of view. This will help you to interpret the connotations of the message and its background.</p> <p>Answers: 1a,b, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5a,b,c,d, 6a, 7a, 8a, 9a,c, 10a,c</p>
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