

Section 1: Reflecting on Communication at Work

Think of a recent interaction at work where you either felt truly heard or felt unheard. Reflect on the following questions:

- How did this interaction make you feel?
- Why do you think this interaction stood out to you?
- What did this interaction reveal about your needs or values around communication?
- What might you do differently next time, or how would you help a colleague feel heard?

Section 2: Observation vs. Evaluation

Read the scenario below:

Jane, a team leader at a housing support organization, notices that a staff member, Priya, is speaking in a raised voice to a service participant. Jane's first reaction is to judge Priya as being rude. However, she applies her NVC skills and focuses on observable facts. Later, she tells Priya, "I heard you speaking in a louder voice with a client this afternoon in the common area." Priya feels safe enough to share that she was activated by the client's words and acknowledges she could have reacted better. Jane offers support in working through this challenge together.

Exercise: Observation or Evaluation?

Instructions: Circle or highlight the number of the statements that are observations only (no evaluations or judgments).

1. "My supervisor Jane was mad at me at work this week for no reason."
2. "John is aggressive."
3. "Sarah met with 5 clients this week."
4. "Mary did not speak during today's meeting."
5. "After the client meeting, Priya left the room without saying anything to anyone."

Section 3: Exploring Feelings and Needs

Reflection Questions

- Name a few words that describe how you typically feel when your needs are being met at work.
- Name a few words that describe how you typically feel when your needs are not being met at work.
- How could you communicate those feelings in a respectful and clear way?

Exercise: Spot the Need

Instructions: Read each statement. Which ones clearly express a need?

- “You never get your reports done on time – you’re making my job harder.”
- “I am feeling overwhelmed lately. I need more time to catch up on my caseload.”
- “I get stressed when we don’t have clear communications – I want us to work together in a way that brings clarity and purpose.”
- “I feel frustrated when you come in late.”

Section 4: Expressing Requests Clearly and Kindly

Exercise: Reframe the Request

Instructions: Rewrite each statement to include a clear, specific, and kind request. Focus on actionable language that respects the autonomy of the other person.

- “I would like for you to feel more confident in yourself when you speak to clients.”
- “I would like you to communicate better.”
- “Rewrite your report so it could be more concise.”
- “I would like you to respect my privacy.”

Optional prompts:

- What specific action would support the request?
- How can I frame it in a way that builds trust or collaboration?
- Check your answers on the answer sheet.