



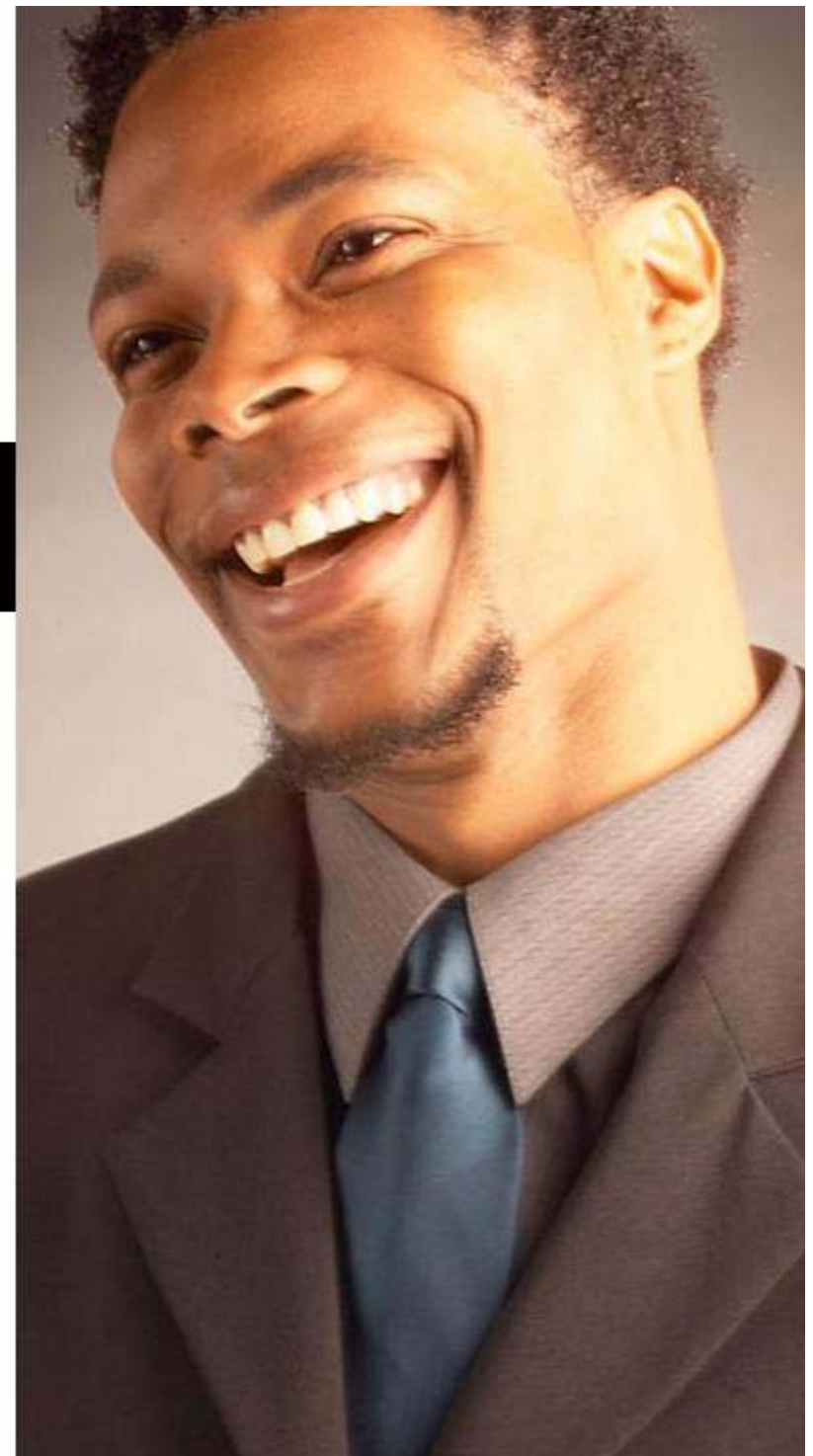
Volunteering S.A. Inc.

Introduction to Effective Communication



Government of South Australia
Office for Volunteers

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INTRODUCTION TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Objectives:

Once you have completed this training you should be able to:

- consider verbal and non-verbal communication methods
- understand and practice effective listening skills
- communicate in clear, respectful and non-judgemental ways
- know when to seek advice

Pathways to a formal qualification

This workshop has been developed to align with aspects of the following nationally recognised units of competence (subjects):

CHCCOM1B Communicate with people accessing the services of the organisation

CHCCOM2B Communicate appropriately with clients and colleagues

As evidence of your participation in the workshop Introduction to Effective Communication you will receive a Certificate of Attendance with a statement outlining what has been covered.

Disclaimer

Volunteering SA Inc and the Government of South Australia accepts no responsibility or liability for any inaccuracies contained in any material in this presentation.

This presentation is intended to provide general useful information and should not be relied upon as constituting any advice.

Attendees should, before acting on any matters arising out of or otherwise in relation to this presentation, seek their own specific independent legal or other advice about their situation.

Activity 1 - What is communication?

Discuss with the people on each side of you – write your own definition.

In your opinion, what does “effective” mean?

Wikipedia definition (on slide):

The process of communication is what allows us to interact with other people; without it, we would be unable to share knowledge or experiences with anything outside of ourselves.

Common forms of communication include speaking, writing, gestures, touch and broadcasting.

Activity 2 :

What is it we need to remember in order to communicate effectively with others?

In the space below list the factors that influence effective communication:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Now select 3 factors you have listed above and give an example for each one:

Activity 3 :

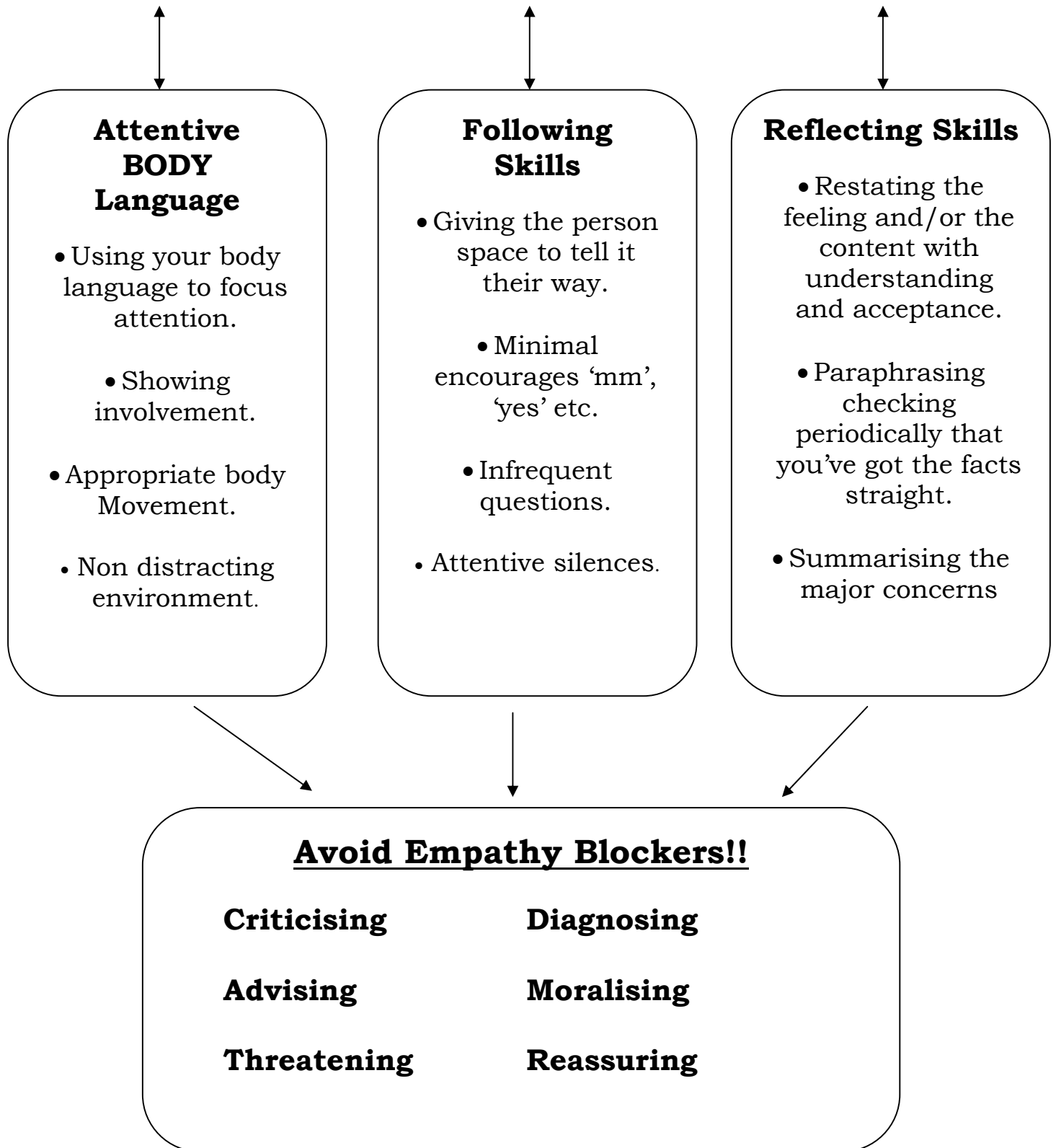
There are a number of factors that can prevent effective communication taking place.

In the space below list the barriers to effective communication:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Select 3 barriers from your list above and give an example of each one:

What is Active Listening



Listening Leads

To understand the other person's feelings and experiences, we need to attempt to understand their "personal frame" through which they see and interact with the world.

However, since it is impossible for us to be the other person, it is desirable that we be continuously open-minded and cautious in appraising others. Consider most judgements as tentative and remember that at best we will have a limited understanding of the person with whom we are interacting.

Below are some phrases that are useful when you trust that your perceptions are correct and the person is receptive to your communications:

You feel	From your point of view
It seems to you	In your experience
From where you stand	As you see it
You think	You believe
What I hear you saying is	I'm picking up that you
I really hear you saying that	You figure
You mean	
You're ... (identify feelings, e.g.: sad, angry, overjoyed, etc...)	

Phrases that are useful when you are having some difficulty perceiving clearly or it seems that the other person might not be receptive to your communications:

Could it be that	I'm not sure if I'm with you, but
Maybe you feel	I somehow sense that maybe you feel
What I think I'm hearing is	Correct me if I'm wrong, but
Is it conceivable that	I guess that you're
Maybe this is a long shot, but	From where I stand
It appears that you	Perhaps you're feeling
As I hear it	I'm not certain I understand, you feel.....
Is that what you mean?	Let me see if I understand you
I get the impression that	Is that the way you feel?

Keeping the Communication Door Open

Responses which invite a person to expand on their thoughts...

I see, mmm, go on...
Tell me about it...
I'd like to hear about it...
I'm interested in your view...
I'm keen to hear more...
How can we assist you?
This seem like something important to you...
Let's hear what you have to say...
That sounds important, tell me more...
What other thoughts have you had on that?

Non Verbals

Nodding
Letting them talk
Eye contact
Gestures
Appropriate touch
Other?...

Open ended and Closed Questions

There are many types of questions that are widely used in every day conversations, some of which are helpful and others that are not. In fact, some questions may be experienced as rude and intrusive.

In some theories it is believed that if skills are used effectively they eliminate the need for any questioning. Others take the view that selective use of some types of questions assist in clarifying, focusing, elaboration, and exploration provided the questions are infrequent and for the benefit of the client.

There are certain things to keep in mind before asking a question. Use attentive silences to consider:

1. The purpose of a question.
2. The most appropriate type of question to use.
3. The probable impact that the question may have

Questions are sometimes called open ended questions or closed questions.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

Open ended questions provide allow a person to express what is relevant to them without issues being imposed on them.

Crucial to open ended questions is the concept of who is to lead the discussion. A question should be centred around the concerns of the client. The question should be designed to help clarify an experience rather than just provide information.

Open ended questions begin with:

WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW, WHO and are helpful in:-

1. Encouraging a person to continue to talk, e.g. "What else has happened in your work situation?"
2. Helping the listener to clarify what is not understood, e.g. "Who was it that sent you this letter?"
3. Helping to identify specific behaviours, e.g. "What do they do specifically that gets you so angry?"
4. Assisting in opening up new areas for exploration, e.g. "Who would you like to know about this?"
5. The exploration of options, e.g. "What would you most like to happen?"

CLOSED QUESTIONS

A closed question often emphasises factual content and can demonstrate a lack of interest. A typical problem with closed questions is that it limits the topics explored.

Just relying on questions means that people concentrate so hard on thinking up the next question they fail to listen. The questions might get answered they don't usually feel listened to and think of the other person as having the answers to their problems.

The question/ answer routine can be productive if, after asking a question, we respond with the following skills to the answer.

Closed questions begin with:

WAS, DID, ARE, DO, IS, WILL, WHY

Closed questions used infrequently are useful in gaining specific information,

- e.g. "Are you married?"
"Is your nephew younger than 18?"
"Is your husband in the house now?"

QUESTIONS TO AVOID

1. The statement question – a question which usually contains the answer, e.g. “Don’t you think that is the reason why you did it?”
2. The seeking agreement question – a question which implies that the person must agree, e.g. “You didn’t really expect that to happen did you?”
3. The forced question – a question which limits choices as the person is forced to choose from the alternatives offered, e.g. “Are you going to continue to be miserable or are you going to do something about it?”
4. The double bind question – a question which limits the person to a choice of two, e.g. “Do you still beat up your wife or have you stopped?”
5. The why question – a question which is usually followed by a “because” statement where the person is forced to rationalise and defend themselves. It is a question that is threatening where the caller feels compelled to justify their behaviour or to guess at the behaviour of others.

What to do when you are asked questions

Such as: “What would you do?”
“What do you think I should do?”

Examples of responses you could make:

“What have you thought of doing?”

“You’re unsure of what you should do?”

“What would you like to have happen?”

“You are unable to decide what to do?”

“Perhaps if we look at some of your options you may find a solution that feels right for you.

Questioning Techniques Activity

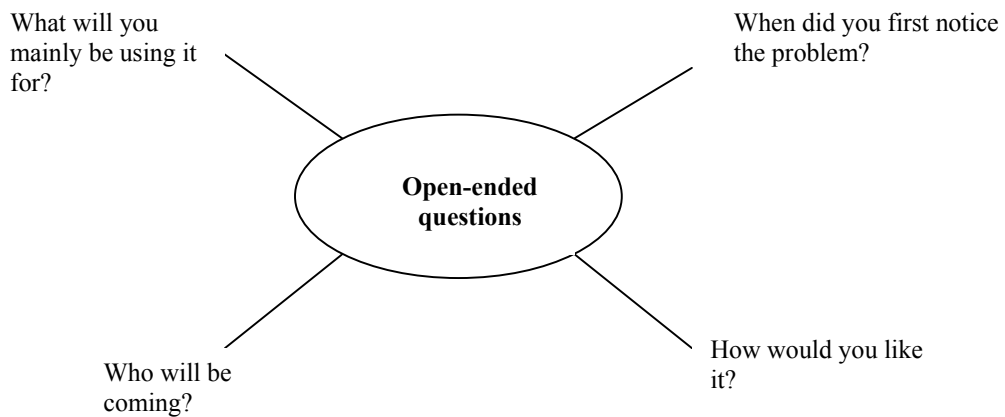
One of the best ways of finding out a person's real needs is to ask lots of open-ended questions.

Open-ended questions are questions which you can't answer with a yes or a no.

They begin with words like:

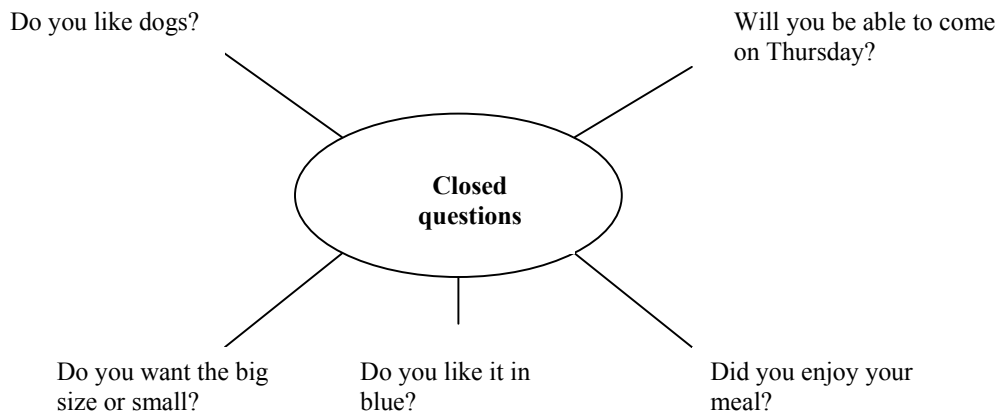
When ...
Why ...
Where ...
Who ...
What ...
How ...

For example:



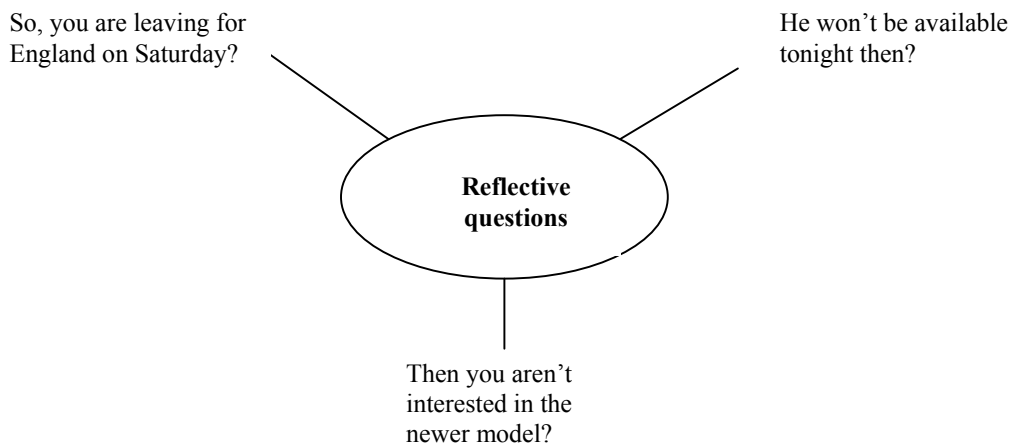
Closed questions are those which can be answered with a yes or no or which give a limited number of categories. You would use these to get a particularly important piece of information after you have established the client's needs.

For example:



Reflective questions, sometimes called 'mirror questions', are those you use when you want to show the speaker that you have heard what he or she said and check your understanding at the same time.

For example:



Activity 4:

For each of the following situations, create an open-ended, a closed and a reflective question.

For example: A client tells you that he is going fishing for the weekend.

Open: Where will you be staying?

Closed: Are you going on your own?

Reflective: So you won't be contactable by phone until Monday?

1. Your doctor tells you that you need to do more exercise.

Open:

Closed:

Reflective:

2. Your mother tells you that she is going interstate for two weeks.

Open:

Closed:

Reflective:

Activity 5 : Questioning Quiz

Take a couple of minutes to complete the following quiz on open and closed questions. Write a **C** if you think it is a Closed Question, an **O** if it is an Open question, and an **R** if it is a Reflective question.

1. ____ What did you do with the file?
2. ____ Where did the customer's paper work go?
3. ____ Have you paid the bill?
4. ____ We need payment by Friday. Will that be OK?
5. ____ How much work is required?
6. ____ Can it be fixed?
7. ____ Is the customer on hold?
8. ____ So your son won't be in today, do you want us to ring later?
9. ____ Why did the taxi come at 3 o'clock?
10. ____ Mr Jones is happy here. Isn't he?
11. ____ Why didn't you give her something to eat?
12. ____ You need to talk about this more. Would it be useful for me to call you?
13. ____ How long have you been coming here?
14. ____ Do you want to have lunch?
15. ____ You are worried about your mother. How do you think we can help?
16. ____ Customers are always right aren't they?
17. ____ Did your supervisor tell you to do that?
18. ____ What are the latest day centre figures?
19. ____ You're worried about getting more help. What do you need?
20. ____ Why do open questions begin with words like how, why, when, where and what?

Activity 6 : CONFIDENTIALITY – Case Study 1

Consider the following scenarios and discuss them with participants at the workshop and/or with colleagues.

Mr Smith is able to continue living at home as he is part of a concerned community and in particular, is visited twice a week by Jane who volunteers with the local Community Program.

Mrs Jones lives next door and is a good neighbour. Recently Mr Smith underwent some tests at the local hospital. When Jane was leaving Mr Smith last week, Mrs Jones stopped her and asked after Mr Smith's health. Jane explained that the test results were negative as she wanted to share the good news. Later that evening Jane reflected on this interaction.

What would have caused Jane to doubt the wisdom in providing this information?

How might she have handled the concerned neighbour's question?

Mrs Green lives on the other side of Mr Smith. She is a brilliant housekeeper and while she likes Mr Smith, she has never thought much of his housekeeping skills. Recently she suggested to Jane that she could bring her Hoover over and tidy up a bit. Jane also has concerns about the state of the house although Mr Smith is clearly unconcerned. Jane thinks it's a very good offer and says she'll get back to Mrs Green.

What factors should influence Jane as she decides what she should do?

What should she do?

Activity 6 : CONFIDENTIALITY - Case Study 2

Don volunteers with the Community Home Visiting Program. This is a vital service which assists older people in the community to be able to continue living in their own homes. The services available through the Program are handyman help, gardening, visiting and assistance with shopping.

Don has been visiting Mrs Clinton for 12 months and has developed a trusting relationship which they both enjoy. Mrs Clinton is a well respected member of the community, has supportive neighbours and a daughter who lives in the next town. She wishes to remain independent and has made her wishes clear in the event of a health or other crisis.

Don's assistance with shopping and the odd household task has given Mrs Clinton confidence to stay at home in spite of some ongoing health problems.

Discussion:

Don has been rung by Mrs Clinton's daughter who has asked how she is **really** doing. She said that her mother always says she is fine, but she wants to know the actual picture from Don.

What is the dilemma for Don re this phone call?

How should he handle it?

Who should Don go to for advice?

Checklist - Introduction to Effective Communication

To assess your understanding of communicating effectively, having attended the training workshop, work through the checklist below.

This checklist is designed to assist you to assess your level of understanding of the issues surrounding effective communication and whether you need to follow up on any point/s or not.

I feel confident that I:

- am able to consider verbal and non-verbal communication methods
- do understand and practise effective listening skills
- do communicate in clear, respectful and non-judgemental ways
- do know when to seek advice
- respect diversity when communicating with clients & colleagues
- respond in culturally appropriate ways
- understand and follow relevant organisational policies and procedures/protocols and legislative requirements - including anti-discrimination, privacy & confidentiality

Introduction to Effective Communication

See below how this topic relates to the National Standards for Volunteer Management

1. Policies and Procedures	2. Management Responsibilities	3. Recruitment	4. Work and the Workplace	5. Training and Development	6. Service Delivery	7. Documentation and Records	8. Continuous Improvement
<p><i>General Policy</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Management System (1.4)</i></p> <p><i>Operating Procedures</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Policy and Procedures (1.13)</i></p>	<p>✓ <i>Management Systems (2.7)</i></p> <p><i>Authority and responsibility</i></p> <p><i>Social Responsibilities</i></p> <p><i>Management Review</i></p> <p><i>Resources</i></p>	<p>✓ <i>Policy and Planning (3.1)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Selection Procedures (3.8)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Volunteer Orientation (3.15)</i></p>	<p>✓ <i>Volunteer Roles (4.1)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Work Satisfaction (all areas)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Health and Safety (4.14, 4.18)</i></p>	<p><i>Policy & Resources</i></p> <p><i>Training Development</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Work Appraisal (5.15)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Volunteer Recognition (5.18)</i></p>	<p>✓ <i>Management Responsibility (6.4)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Services Review (6.7, 6.10, 6.11)</i></p>	<p>✓ <i>Personnel Records (7.1)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>System Documentation and Control (7.7)</i></p>	<p><i>Policy & Resources</i></p> <p><i>Data Collection & Analysis</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Quality Improvement (8.8)</i></p>