



EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module 2 – Communication enhancement

Method 4 – Communication simulation

Case study

Module 2 – Communication Enhancement

Case study - From Anxiety to Confidence: Practising Real-Life Conversations

Related Method - Communication Simulations

Context and Background

Organisation: A municipal employment centre in Central Europe that provides job-readiness training for unemployed adults and those re-entering the labour market.

Target Group: Adults aged 25–50, mixed gender, with diverse educational backgrounds; many were long-term unemployed or migrants with limited local work experience.

Scope: The centre aimed to increase participants' confidence and competence in handling real-life communication situations such as job interviews, workplace meetings, and customer interactions.

Problem / Challenge Presented

Many participants reported severe anxiety when facing structured conversations like interviews or workplace disputes. They often lacked strategies to manage nerves, organise their thoughts, or respond effectively under pressure. Language barriers and lack of familiarity with local workplace culture further worsened communication difficulties. As a result, participants frequently performed poorly in interviews or struggled in team settings, leading to missed opportunities.

Actions Taken / Method Applied

The centre introduced **Communication Simulations** as a structured part of its training programme.

Key activities included:

- **Job Interview Simulations**: participants practised answering behavioural and situational questions in mock interviews, rotating roles as interviewee, interviewer, and observer.
- **Conflict Resolution Role-Plays**: learners acted out workplace disputes, practising de-escalation and assertive communication.

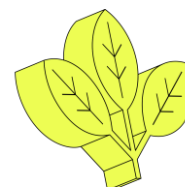
Facilitators provided clear role cards, feedback forms, and step-by-step reflection discussions. Observers contributed peer feedback to make learning collaborative.

Outcomes and Results

Participants demonstrated improved ability to manage conversations under pressure.

Learners reported feeling more confident in handling conflicts calmly and respectfully.

Role-play simulations helped them practise empathy by considering the perspective of others in difficult situations.



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Several participants highlighted that the structured techniques (such as “I” statements and focusing on solutions) made their communication clearer and more constructive.

Lessons Learned

Simulations are most effective when scenarios are directly relevant to learners’ lives (job search, workplace, community interactions).

Rotation of roles (speaker, listener, observer) deepens learning and ensures everyone benefits from different perspectives.

Feedback sessions are critical: without structured reflection, learners may miss opportunities to internalise lessons.

Key Success Factors

Supportive learning environment where mistakes were reframed as learning opportunities.

Use of structured role cards and feedback forms, which made expectations clear and gave learners concrete areas to improve.

Facilitators modelling effective communication behaviours for learners to imitate.

Peer encouragement, which reduced performance anxiety and increased group trust.

Challenges Encountered and How They Were Addressed

Some learners initially struggled with staying calm when role-playing conflicts. Facilitators reminded them that the activity was a “safe rehearsal space” where mistakes are part of learning.

A few participants tended to escalate the role-play by raising their voices or interrupting; this was managed by introducing reflection pauses and asking learners to restart with a calmer approach.

Cultural differences in conflict expression created misunderstandings in some groups. These were addressed by discussing cultural perspectives on disagreement and highlighting universal respectful communication strategies.

Applicability / Recommendations for Educators

Start with low-pressure simulations (everyday scenarios) before moving to high-stakes settings like interviews.

Use peer roles (observer feedback) to encourage active learning even when not speaking.

Keep scenarios short and structured (5–7 minutes) to maintain focus and ensure multiple rounds.

Always include a guided debrief to link practice to learners’ real-life goals.

Adapt complexity to group needs: simplify for beginners, add layered challenges (e.g., time pressure, difficult personalities) for advanced learners.