**Activity plan**

**Communication skills**

| **Aims** | To increase students’ awareness of the importance of communication skills in the world of work (including for work experience and volunteering placements), and for getting through the recruitment process for a job or apprenticeship.  
To encourage students to reflect on different types of communication skills, whether they have them and how they could improve them. |
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<td><strong>Resources needed</strong></td>
<td>Paper for each group/pair to write down their thoughts (could use flipchart paper/sugar paper and marker pens if desired).</td>
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| **Background and timing** | The activity can be delivered by a teacher with no careers guidance experience.  
The activity doesn’t require students to have taken part in any previous careers activities or guidance.  
The activity is designed for students in years 10–13, or S3–S6 in Scotland.  
The activity is designed to take around 20 minutes. |
| **Adapting the activity to your needs** | Timings can be adapted. If you have under 20 minutes or a class that’s likely to work slowly, pick and choose the elements that are most important to you. Or you could split the activity across more than one lesson. |
| **Useful resources for teachers** | Teachers might find it useful to read articles such as ‘The top ten skills that’ll get you a job when you leave school’ on TARGETcareers.  
There are also relevant articles on our graduate careers website, TARGETjobs, such as ‘Communication – the skill that sustains information flow’ and ‘Written exercises at assessment centres: showcase your professionalism’. These show what may be expected of students who go to university before seeking work – for some apprenticeships, candidates will have to prove their communication skills in similar ways. |
### Task 1 – understanding communication skills
- **Group task**
- **Allow five minutes**

Teacher divides class into small groups (approx four/five students per group).

Teacher explains that this activity is about communication skills and their importance in the workplace.

In groups, students discuss and write down answers to the following:

1. What different forms of communication are there that different people (not just you) use in their work or personal life? Think of at least five (teacher can give hints if necessary, e.g. face-to-face, phone, email, social media, videos, TV broadcasts).
2. For each, decide how common you think it is for people to use this form of communication in their jobs (for example, not many people present TV shows, but lots of people send emails).

Groups feed back a selection of their thoughts to the rest of the class.

### Task 2 – your communication skills
- **In pairs**
- **Allow 15 minutes**

Teacher divides groups into pairs.

In pairs, students discuss and write down answers to the following:

1. Which forms of communication do you/have you used?
2. Which ones do you feel more/less confident about?
3. Are there any that you think you’ll need to gain more confidence in, or experience of, before you start work or work experience? How could you do so?
4. Think of some specific examples of times when you have used different types of communication in new or challenging situations. For example, perhaps you had to talk to customers on the phone during a work experience placement, give a presentation to the rest of your year group, or keep control of a group of younger students while you were leading an activity for them.

Teacher selects two or three pairs to share a selection of their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Teacher explains that communication skills are very important to employers and you might have to prove that you are a good communicator in order to get a job. Some employers will ask you for specific examples of times when you’ve communicated in different contexts, and/or test you on your communication skills as part of the recruitment process.

### Extension work
*(optional – to be completed in own time)*

Think of a job that you might want to do when you are older. Why do good communication skills matter in this job?

If you’re not sure what job to pick or don’t know very much about it, use the TARGETcareers career sectors and job descriptions to do some research first.

You might also find the articles in the skills and experience section useful, such as *‘The top ten skills that’ll get you a job when you leave school’*. 