Commonwealth Corporation, created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1997, designs and executes workforce strategies in partnership with businesses, educators, and training providers across the state. Signal Success is a Commonwealth Corporation initiative designed to help teens and young adults bridge the gap between high school and workforce. The Signal Success curriculum is the intellectual property of the Commonwealth Corporation with the exception of cited materials from other resources. Signal Success should only be used, duplicated and dispersed with specific permission from Commonwealth Corporation.
In the Signal Success curriculum, students get explicit exposure to foundational non-cognitive skills followed by more intensive exploration of advanced skills.

This sample includes:

- Effective Communication (pages 137-141) from the Communication and Collaboration Chapter in Unit 2
- Identifying & Approaching Conflict (pages 287-290) from the Self-Advocacy and Resolving Conflict Chapter in Unit 5
Elijah is feeling frustrated. His friend Carla helped him get a job at a local clothing store. During his first week, Carla offered to help Elijah. Elijah is struggling on the cash register and could use some tips. Carla has said she will find time to help him, but several weeks have gone by and she has been too busy.

Yesterday Elijah’s supervisor told him he really needs to get faster on the register. Elijah was starting to worry that he might lose his job. So, Elijah asked Carla to help him. Carla said she had to finish putting out some new stock. Elijah exploded: ‘You don’t care about helping me at all. You are such a liar! You have been promising to help me, and it’s never going to happen.”

In return Carla got very angry, and replied, “You are so selfish and ungrateful! I practically got you this job, and now you want me to drop whatever I am doing, just because you are too slow to figure out the register.”

1.) What went wrong?

2.) What could Elijah have done differently?

3.) What could Carla have done differently?
Group Practice: What Would You Say?

**DIRECTIONS** Read over each of the role play starters. Work with your partners to practice each of the different conversation scenarios. See how the conversations go differently when you use passive or aggressive communication. Then practice using effective. Use the tables to take notes on your role plays.

### SCENARIO 1: Manager and Employee

**Ineffective-Passive Communication**
- low energy
- blaming
- apologetic
- few ideas
- listening, but not showing you understand
- I lose-you win attitude

**Effective Communication**
- in control
- calm, listening, self-confident
- accepts responsibility
- exchange of ideas
- actively listening and showing that you understand
- I win-you win attitude

**Ineffective-Aggressive Communication**
- out of control
- attacking, blaming
- put downs
- interruptions
- refusing to listen
- I win-you lose attitude

**Type of Communication** | **Summarize the Conversation** | **What was the outcome...**
---|---|---
Ineffective-Passive | | |
Ineffective-Aggressive | | |
Effective | | |
### SCENARIO 2: CO-WORKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Communication</th>
<th>Summarize the Conversation</th>
<th>What was the outcome...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective-Passive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective-Aggressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Hi, Angela. I just wanted to see how your first day went...**

**It was great! This job is soo easy...**

**Hmmm. I noticed that some of your files were in the wrong format. I can show you a good way to remember the procedure.**

---

### SCENARIO 2: CUSTOMER AND EMPLOYEE

**Excuse me! I asked for diet, and this is regular! I think I should get my whole meal for free because you messed up my drink order...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Communication</th>
<th>Summarize the Conversation</th>
<th>What was the outcome...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective-Passive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective-Aggressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Strategies for Workplace Communication

**DIRECTIONS** Use the space below to take notes about what you learn during the lecture on communication.

Expectations for Skits:

One question I have is: __________________________________________________________

Group Presentation: Develop your Own Workplace Skit

**DIRECTIONS** Work with your partners to develop a workplace communication skit. Develop a passive, aggressive, and effective version for the scenario, and be ready to present each to the whole class.

*Ineffective-Passive Communication*
- low energy
- blaming
- apologetic
- few ideas
- listening, but not showing you understand
- I lose-you win attitude

*Effective Communication*
- in control
- calm, listening, self-confident
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- I win-you win attitude

*Ineffective-Aggressive Communication*
- out of control
- attacking, blaming
- put downs
- interruptions
- refusing to listen
- I win-you lose attitude

(Use the space below to draw or write out your plan for the workplace communication skit.)
## Mock Workplace Communication Skits

### EXPECTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-VERBAL</strong></td>
<td>The presenter...</td>
<td>The presenter...</td>
<td>The presenter...</td>
<td>The presenter...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Avoids making eye contact</td>
<td>- Sometimes makes eye contact</td>
<td>- Often makes eye contact</td>
<td>- Holds eye contact during the whole conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shows signs that he is not listening</td>
<td>- May be listening, but it is hard to tell from body language</td>
<td>- Shows open body language in stance</td>
<td>- Stands in a friendly and attentive manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- May seem angry, upset or distracted</td>
<td>- Shows neutral emotions.</td>
<td>- Shows listening and agreement</td>
<td>- Nods to indicate listening and agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Doesn’t respond to other person’s comments</td>
<td>- Tries to respond to what the other person is saying, but the responses are unclear</td>
<td>- Responds effectively to what the other person is saying</td>
<td>- Responds effectively and clearly to what the other person is saying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Avoids key topics</td>
<td>- Has a hard time keeping the conversation flowing</td>
<td>- Tries to resolve any conflicts</td>
<td>- Asks questions to get clarity and to expand the conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blames others or distracts from the issue</td>
<td>- Interrupts the other person</td>
<td>- Takes personal responsibility but is assertive and avoids blaming self or others</td>
<td>- Uses ‘I’ statements when appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Interrupts the other person</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- Shows interest and positive emotions</td>
<td>- Is assertive and fair in all comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GLOWS (Positive Comments)</th>
<th>GROWS (Suggestions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### PRESENTATION REFLECTION

Refer to the rubric and circle a rating for each of the two aspects of your presentation. Write a comment about your rating.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Root Causes in Conflict

DIRECTIONS Read through the scenario and word with your partner to answer the questions.

Andres and Dahlia both work part-time in the office of a local non-profit organization. Andres used to work on Tuesday and Thursday, but their manager Scott recently changed the schedule so Andres and Dahlia both work Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

They share a cubicle and have to work together a lot on different organizational projects. Andres is pretty sure that Dahlia does not like working with him, and he is sick of her being so difficult.

1.) Which root cause(s) of conflict are present in Andres and Dahlia’s story? Describe the specific causes.

2.) What could Andres do differently?

3.) What could Dahlia do differently?
Root Causes in Conflict (Continued)

**DIRECTIONS** Take a moment to think about experiences that you have had with conflict in the workplace. If you haven’t worked much, focus on your experience working with others on school projects, sports teams, and afterschool activities. Answer the following questions and be ready to discuss with a partner.

1.) Pick one work-based conflict that you have had and summarize it.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2.) Which of the common root causes do you think played a role in the conflict you summarized above?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3.) How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4.) Complete the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive choices I made during this conflict...</th>
<th>Positive choices other(s) made during this conflict...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ways I could have handled this situation better...</td>
<td>Ways other(s) could have handled this situation better...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PORTFOLIO CONNECTION**

“Conflict Style”
Exploring Approaches to Conflict

**DIRECTIONS** You and your partner(s) will be given a scenario. Visit each of the conflict stations and discuss how the responding person in the scenario would act if they were using conflict response style presented at that station. When you have visited all of the stations, work with your partner to answer the questions below.

1. Summarize your scenario.

2. For your scenario, which of the approaches felt **most** effective? Why?

3. For your scenario, which of the approaches felt **least** effective? Why?
Time for a 5-Minute Mingle!

**DIRECTIONS** Your instructor will give you a card with a picture, number or symbol. Find the person whose card matches your card and:

**Round 1 (2.5 Minutes):**

Find your partners and discuss:

- Which conflict approaches have you have taken in the past? Be specific and include examples.
- Which of the approaches are you most likely to use? Why?
- Which of the approaches are you least likely to use? Why?

**Round 2: Code-Switching (2.5 Minutes):**

- Re-approach your partner and do your best to communicate in a more formal and professional manner.
- Shake hands.
- Introduce yourself.
- Imagine that your partner is a potential employer who has just asked you to discuss how you handle conflict with co-workers during team projects. Try and include examples from your past experiences to provide support for your answer and to make your response feel more interesting.