SI/EQ Skills Workshop: Participant Manual (draft)

Welcome

Welcome to the **SI/EQ Skills Workshop**.

This workshop is designed to help you strengthen the skills that most influence your effectiveness as a leader, teammate, and communicator. These include:

- Self-awareness
- Empathy
- Listening
- Clear communication
- Facilitation and leadership in groups

Unlike many traditional training programs, this workshop is **highly interactive**. You will learn not only by listening, but by discussing, reflecting, practicing, and observing how communication works in real time.

Your willingness to participate openly and thoughtfully will determine how much value you gain from the experience.

Workshop Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants should be able to:

• Understand the role of empathy in effective leadership
• Recognize patterns in human behavior and communication
• Improve listening and questioning skills
• Facilitate more productive conversations
• Reflect on their own communication habits
• Develop a practical action plan for continued growth

How This Workshop Works

This program uses several learning methods:

Discussion

Participants analyze real communication examples and share perspectives.

Observation

Video segments demonstrate communication interactions that participants will evaluate.

Dialogue

Guided discussion allows participants to explore what works and what does not in communication situations.

Role Play

Participants may practice communication techniques with one another.

Reflection

Time is provided to reflect on personal strengths, habits, and opportunities for growth.

Participant Responsibilities

Each participant plays an important role in the learning environment.

To gain the most from the workshop:

- Participate actively in discussions
- Listen carefully to others
- Ask honest questions
- Be open to examining your own assumptions
- Practice the skills being discussed
- Respect differing viewpoints

Remember:

What you get from this workshop will depend largely on what you put into it.

Section 1: Introduction

Purpose

This section answers the question:

"Why are we here?"

It also establishes expectations for the workshop and begins building trust within the group.

Reflection Questions

1. What motivated you to participate in this workshop?
2. What communication challenges do you experience most often?
3. What would make this workshop valuable for you?

Notes:

Section 2: Ground Rules

Effective learning environments require shared expectations.

Ground rules help create a setting where participants can speak openly, learn from mistakes, and hold one another accountable.

Common Ground Rules

• Speak honestly and respectfully
• Listen fully before responding
• Avoid interrupting others
• Focus on learning rather than winning arguments
• Maintain confidentiality where appropriate

Reflection Questions

1. Which ground rule is most important for productive dialogue?
2. Which is most difficult to follow consistently?

Notes:

Section 3: Current Reality

Before developing new skills, it is helpful to assess current abilities.

This section invites participants to reflect on their current communication patterns and interpersonal effectiveness.

Self-Assessment Reflection

Consider the following questions:

- How well do I listen when someone disagrees with me?
- Do I tend to interrupt or finish other people's sentences?
- How often do I ask questions instead of giving advice?
- Do others feel heard when speaking with me?

Write down one strength and one area for improvement.

Strength:

Area for Improvement:

Section 4: Behavioral Styles

Human behavior often follows recognizable patterns.

Understanding these patterns can improve communication and reduce misunderstanding.

People frequently differ in:

- decision-making style
- pace of communication
- emotional expression
- problem-solving approach

Recognizing these differences helps individuals adapt their communication approach to work more effectively with others.

Reflection Questions

1. How would you describe your natural communication style?

2. What types of personalities do you find easiest to work with?
3. Which types challenge you the most?

Notes:

Section 5: Empathy and Communication

Empathy is the ability to understand another person's experience or perspective.

Empathy does not require agreement. It requires **attention and understanding**.

Strong empathy skills help leaders:

• build trust
• resolve conflict
• strengthen collaboration
• improve decision making

Reflection Exercise

Think of a recent conversation where communication did not go well.

Ask yourself:

• Did I truly listen?
• Did I try to understand the other person's perspective?
• What might I do differently next time?

Notes:

Section 6: Active Listening

Listening is often assumed to be simple, but it is one of the most difficult communication skills.

Most people experience **internal dialogue** while someone else is speaking. These thoughts may include:

• evaluating what is being said
• planning a response
• judging or agreeing
• remembering a similar experience

This internal commentary can interfere with listening.

Listening Practice

When someone is speaking:

1. Notice your internal thoughts.
2. Acknowledge them without following them.
3. Refocus your attention on the speaker.

Reflection Questions

1. When do you find it hardest to listen fully?
2. What habits interfere with your listening?

Notes:

Section 7: Facilitation Skills

Facilitation is the skill of guiding conversations so that groups can think clearly, explore ideas, and reach useful conclusions.

Effective facilitators:

• ask thoughtful questions
• listen carefully
• help clarify ideas
• encourage participation
• maintain focus on the purpose of the discussion

Practice Questions

During discussions, facilitators often ask questions such as:

- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- What was missing?
- What could be done differently?

These questions help groups move from opinion toward deeper understanding.

Section 8: Closure

Every productive meeting or conversation should end with **closure**.

Closure ensures that participants leave with clarity about what was learned and what actions will follow.

Key Closure Question

"What needs to be said now so that this conversation feels complete?"

Action Plan

Use the space below to outline one action you will take after this workshop.

Goal:

Action Steps:

Completion Date:

Accountability Partner:

Personal Takeaways

What are the three most important ideas you are taking from this workshop?

1.

2.

3.

Final Reflection

The purpose of this workshop is not simply to understand communication concepts. It is to help participants become more effective leaders, teammates, and human beings.

Take a moment to reflect:

- What insight from this workshop might change how you communicate?
- How might these skills improve your relationships?

Write your thoughts below.

Thank You

Thank you for your participation in the SI/EQ Skills Workshop.

Your willingness to learn, reflect, and practice these skills contributes not only to your own development, but to the effectiveness of every group you lead or serve.