

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are generally considered to include a wide range of skills such as:

- Communication skills, which covers:
 - Verbal communication – what we say and how we say it
 - Non-verbal communication – what we communicate without words (body language or tone of voice)
 - Listening skills – how we interpret both the verbal and non-verbal messages sent by others
- Emotional intelligence – being able to understand and manage your own and other's emotions
- Team-working – being able to work with others in groups and teams
- Negotiation, persuasion and influence skills – working with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome
- Conflict resolution and mediation – working with others to resolve interpersonal conflicts and disagreements in a positive way
- Problem solving and decision-making – working with others to identify, define and solve problems

Good interpersonal skills are often viewed as the foundation for good working and social relationships and also for developing many other areas of skill.

Improving and developing your interpersonal skills is best done in steps:

1. Identify areas for improvement
 - a. Discover your strengths and weaknesses
2. Focus on your basic communication skills
 - a. Listening skills
 - b. Non-verbal skills (body language, tone of voice, speed at which you speak)
3. Improve your more advanced communication skills
 - a. Discover if there are
 - i. Physical barriers
 - ii. Emotional barriers
 - iii. Expectations and prejudices
4. Look inward
 - a. Emotional intelligence
 - i. Personal skills
 1. Self-awareness
 2. Self-regulation
 3. Motivation
 - ii. Social skills
 1. Empathy

5. Use and practice your interpersonal skills
 - a. Group-working
 - b. Need to negotiate, persuade and influence others
 - c. Resolving and mediating in conflict scenarios
 - d. Involve more than one person
6. Reflect on your experience and improve