# Program Information

## Lesson:

### *Employability Skills: Communication Skills*

## Training:

## Premises Cabling

## Time frame:

### 60 minutes

# Instruction Section

## Learning Objectives:

# Enhance verbal communication skills with customers and coworkers.

# Develop active listening techniques for better information gathering and clarification.

# Improve comprehension and conveying of written information related to cabling projects.

# Strengthen observation skills to identify issues and ensure quality.

## Assessment Tools/Methods:

# Provide specific, constructive feedback based on the observations, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

# Encourage participants to reflect on their performance and discuss their learning outcomes.

## Learner Prior Knowledge:

# Cabling Terminology: Participants should be familiar with common cabling terminology, such as Ethernet cables, fiber optics, connectors (e.g., RJ45), patch panels, and cable management.

# Professional Etiquette: Basic knowledge of professional communication, including how to greet customers, interact with coworkers, and handle customer inquiries or complaints respectfully.

# Written Communication: Ability to read and understand simple written instructions, work orders, and technical documentation.

## Instructional Activities:

# Begin by briefly discussing how effective communication can lead to successful project completion, safety, and customer satisfaction.

# Activity 1: Verbal Communication

# Define verbal communication, the use of spoken words to convey information, express ideas, and interact with others, and have the group discuss its significance in premises cabling.

# Emphasize the importance of clarity, tone, and professionalism when speaking with customers and coworkers.

# Pair participants and provide them with scripts from the Role-Play Scenario Handout for a customer service scenario (e.g., explaining a cabling issue to a customer).

# After the role-play, discuss what worked well and areas for improvement.

# Activity 2: Active Listening

# With the group, create a definition for active listening making sure to include the components of paying attention, showing understanding, and providing feedback.

# Explain how active listening can prevent misunderstandings and enhance collaboration, especially for those beginning in the cabling field.

# Complete a listening exercise where one participant describes a cabling problem while the other listens and summarizes the key points; then switch roles and repeat.

# Discuss the importance of paraphrasing and asking clarifying questions.

# Activity 3: Comprehending and Conveying Written Information

# Discuss the importance of accurately reading and interpreting documents such as blueprints, work orders, and manuals.

# Have the group brainstorm tips for clear and concise written communication, including email etiquette.

# Provide participants with the Sample Work Order Handout, ask participants to read it, then write a brief summary or a list of required tasks.

# After the activity, review summaries and highlight key details that should be included.

# Activity 4: Observation Skills and Wrap-up Activity

# Discuss observation skills and their role in identifying potential issues as a group discussion, ensuring safety, and maintaining quality in cabling work, even for those starting in premises cabling.

# Present the whole group with the following scenario, Resolving a Customer Complaint about Internet Connectivity, involving verbal communication, active listening, written instructions, and observation.

# Have participants split into two groups, one group will act as the technician, the other will be the customer. The technician group will start the conversation and then the customer group will respond. Complete this conversation until a resolution is reached.

# Instructor Note: There is a sample script provided with key points in the event the group is struggling and needs help .

# Scenario Context:

# A customer contacts your cabling company with a complaint about slow internet connectivity in their office. As a new cabling technician, you are tasked with addressing the customer's concerns and providing a solution.

# Roles:

# Technician: You are the cabling technician responsible for troubleshooting and resolving the customer's complaint.

# Customer: You are the customer experiencing slow internet connectivity issues and seeking assistance from the cabling company.

# Once the activity is complete, discuss how the activity can help prepare the participants for similar situations in the field.

# Recap the key points of effective verbal communication, active listening, written communication, and observation and highlight how these skills contribute to professional development and workplace efficiency. In conclusion, encourage participants to apply these skills in their daily work and continue practicing.

##  Resources:

# Whiteboard and markers

# Role-Play Scenario Handout

# Sample Work Order Handout

# Resolving a Customer Complaint Script Example for Instructors

# Reflection Section

# How do you think improving your verbal communication, active listening, written comprehension, and observation skills will impact your effectiveness and confidence as a new premises cabling technician in real-world scenarios? What will you do to include these skills in your work as a technician?

*Note: AI, specifically ChatGPT 3.5, was used to generate scenarios for this contextualized lesson plan.*

**Role-Play Scenario Handout**

**Scenario 1:** Initial Customer Greeting and Site Assessment

*Context:* A technician arrives at a customer's home to install new internet cabling.

*Technician:* The technician is responsible for greeting the customer, explaining the purpose of the visit, and assessing the site for the installation*.*

*Customer:* The customer is responsible for providing access to the installation area and expressing any preferences or concern.

*Objectives*:

* The technician practices a professional and friendly greeting.
* The technician explains the purpose of the visit clearly and concisely.
* The technician asks relevant questions to understand the customer’s preferences and gather necessary information about the installation site.
* The customer provides information about the location of the router and any specific preferences for cable routing.

**Scenario 2:**  Explaining a Basic Service to a Customer

*Context*: A customer wants to understand more about the type of internet cabling being installed.

*Technician*: The technician is responsible for providing a clear and simple explanation of the service being performed, including details about the type of cabling and its benefits.

*Customer*: The technician is responsible for providing a clear and simple explanation of the service being performed, including details about the type of cabling and its benefits.

*Objectives*:

* The technician explains the type of cabling being installed (e.g., Cat6) and its benefits, such as improved speed and reduced interference.
* The technician uses simple, non-technical language to ensure the customer understands.
* The technician addresses any questions the customer may have, providing clear and accurate information.

**Scenario 3**: Two technicians are working together to install a complex network cabling system in a large office building

*Context*: A cabling company collaborates with external contractors (e.g., electricians, HVAC technicians) on a large-scale project involving cabling installations in a commercial building.

*Technician 1*: The lead technician is responsible for explaining the overall plan and delegating tasks.

*Technician 2*: The assisting technician is responsible for understanding the instructions, asking questions for clarification, and performing the assigned tasks.

*Objectives:*

* The lead technician clearly explains the installation plan, including the layout, specific tasks, and safety protocols.
* The assisting technician listens attentively, asks relevant questions to clarify any uncertainties, and confirms understanding of the tasks.
* Both technicians work collaboratively, communicating effectively to ensure the installation is completed correctly and efficiently.

**Sample Work Order Handout**

This basic work order provides clear instructions and details for a cabling project, including client information, project scope, task list, materials required, and additional notes. It serves as a reference for technicians to comprehend and convey the necessary information for successful project execution.

Work Order Client Information:

Client Name: XYZ Corporation

Contact Person: John Smith

Contact Number: 123-456-7890

Address: 123 Main Street, Anytown, USA

Project Details:

Project Name: Office Network Cabling Upgrade

Project Start Date: [Insert Date]

Project End Date: [Insert Date]

Scope of Work: Upgrade the existing office network cabling to Cat6 standard for improved performance and reliability.

Task List:

* Run Cat6 cables from the server room to all 20 office workstations.
* Install new patch panels and terminate cables according to industry standards.
* Label each cable and corresponding port on the patch panel for easy identification.
* Test and certify all cables for proper connectivity and performance.
* Provide documentation and training for client IT staff on cable management and troubleshooting.

Materials Required:

* Cat6 cables (quantity: 500 ft)
* Patch panels (quantity: 2)
* RJ45 connectors (quantity: 50)
* Cable labels and markers
* Cable testing equipment (e.g., cable tester, continuity tester)
* Documentation templates for client training

Additional Notes:

Access to the server room will be provided by the client IT team.

Work must be completed during non-business hours to minimize disruption to office operations.

Client prefers cable routing along walls and under desks for a neat and organized appearance.

**Resolving a Customer Complaint Script Example for Instructors**

Scenario: Resolving a Customer Complaint about Internet Connectivity

Context: A customer contacts your cabling company with a complaint about slow internet connectivity in their office. As a new cabling technician, you are tasked with addressing the customer's concerns and providing a solution.

Roles:

Technician (Role-played by a Participant): You are the cabling technician responsible for troubleshooting and resolving the customer's complaint.

Customer (Role-played by Another Participant or Instructor): You are the customer experiencing slow internet connectivity issues and seeking assistance from the cabling company.

Script Example:

Technician: (Approaches customer) "Good morning, I'm Alex from XYZ Cabling. How can I assist you today?"

Customer: "Hi Alex, I'm John from ABC Corporation. We've been experiencing really slow internet speeds in our office, and it's seriously affecting our productivity. We need this fixed as soon as possible."

Technician: "I understand the urgency, John. Let's start by figuring out the issue. When did you first notice the slow speeds, and is it affecting all devices in your office?"

Customer: "It started a few days ago, and yes, it's affecting all our computers and devices."

Technician: "Thanks for the details. I'll check your network equipment and run some diagnostics to pinpoint any problems. Could you show me your network setup, please?"

Customer: "Sure, follow me."

(John leads Alex to the network equipment. Alex examines the setup and runs diagnostics.)

Technician: "John, I've found a problem with one of your network switches that could be causing the slow speeds. It looks like it needs to be replaced. I recommend scheduling a time for me to replace the faulty switch and make sure everything is working properly."

Customer: "Thank you for finding the issue, Alex. Can we do it as soon as possible? We're really struggling with these slow speeds."

Technician: "Absolutely, I can take care of it today. I'll get the replacement switch and start working on it right away. We'll get this resolved quickly for you."

Customer: "Thank you, Alex. We appreciate your prompt response."

Technician: "You're welcome, John. I'll get started on this immediately. Thanks for choosing XYZ Cabling."

**Key Learning Points:**

**Verbal Communication:**

* **Clarity and Conciseness:** Ensure that your messages are clear and to the point to avoid misunderstandings.
* **Tone and Volume:** Use an appropriate tone and volume to convey your message effectively and maintain a professional demeanor.
* **Engagement:** Use engaging language to keep the listener interested and involved in the conversation.
* **Feedback:** Encourage and be open to feedback to ensure the message has been understood as intended.

**Active Listening:**

* **Focus:** Give your full attention to the speaker, avoiding distractions and maintaining eye contact.
* **Understanding:** Summarize or paraphrase what the speaker has said to confirm understanding.
* **Empathy:** Show empathy and understanding of the speaker's feelings and perspectives.
* **Non-Verbal Cues:** Be aware of and respond to non-verbal signals like body language and facial expressions.

**Comprehending and Conveying Written Information:**

* **Reading for Understanding:** Read all documents carefully, noting key points and instructions.
* **Accuracy:** Ensure accuracy when writing or conveying written information to avoid miscommunications.
* **Structure:** Organize written information logically with clear headings, bullet points, and concise paragraphs.
* **Proofreading:** Always proofread written communications to correct any errors before sending.

**Observation:**

* **Attention to Detail:** Pay close attention to small details that might indicate larger issues or patterns.
* **Environmental Awareness:** Be aware of the surroundings and context to better understand and interpret observations.
* **Non-Verbal Cues:** Observe non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice to gain deeper insights.
* **Documentation:** Accurately document observations to create a reliable record that can be referred to later.