

Individual Exercise MT1.3_6: Scenario Writing – Positive vs. Negative Language Reflection

Objective:

To encourage participants to reflect on their own communication style by practicing both positive and negative language in a given scenario, then evaluating the potential outcomes and emotional impact of each approach.

Duration:

10-15 Minutes

Instructions:

1. Choose a Scenario:

1. Provide each participant with a scenario where they need to communicate with someone else. Example scenarios could include:
 1. **Providing Feedback:** A team member made several mistakes in a report.
 2. **Requesting Help:** They need assistance from a colleague on a time-sensitive task.
 3. **Addressing a Delay:** They have to inform a client or manager that a deadline will be missed.

2. Write Two Responses:

1. **Positive Response:** Ask participants to write a response using positive, constructive language that is empathetic, respectful, and solution-focused.
2. **Negative Response:** Next, have them write a version using negative language, focusing on criticism or placing blame without suggesting solutions or support.

3. Self-Reflection:

1. Once both responses are written, ask participants to answer the following reflection questions:
 1. **Emotional Impact:** How would each response likely make the recipient feel?
 2. **Potential Outcome:** Which response would likely lead to a more productive or positive outcome? Why?
 3. **Self-Awareness:** Reflecting on your own communication style, which approach do you think you tend to use? How might you improve?

4. Debrief:

1. If appropriate, invite volunteers to share their reflections or insights.

2. Summarize key takeaways, emphasizing how positive language can build trust, motivate others, and create solutions, while negative language can damage relationships and hinder progress.

Scenario 1: Providing Feedback on a Mistake in a Report

Context: A team member submitted a report with several errors, and you need to provide feedback.

- **Positive Response:**

“Hi [Team Member's Name], I noticed a few areas in the report that could use some adjustment to ensure accuracy, and I appreciate the effort you've put in so far. I'd be happy to go through it with you and address these specific areas to strengthen the final version. Let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss how we can make it even better.”

- **Negative Response:**

“There are a lot of errors in this report. It's clear that you didn't pay attention to the details, which is disappointing. I expect you to go back and fix these issues on your own, and please make sure this doesn't happen again.”

Scenario 2: Requesting Help from a Colleague on a Time-Sensitive Task

Context: You're overwhelmed with work and need assistance from a colleague to meet a deadline.

- **Positive Response:**

“Hi [Colleague's Name], I'm working on a time-sensitive project, and I could really use your expertise. Would you be able to assist me with [specific task]? It would help me meet the deadline, and I'd really appreciate your support. Let me know if you're available, and we can figure out how to coordinate.”

- **Negative Response:**

“Hey, I need you to help me with this project because I don't have enough time to finish it myself. Can you get on this as soon as possible? I don't want to miss the deadline.”

Scenario 3: Addressing a Delay with a Client or Manager

Context: You realize that a project deadline will be missed, and you need to inform a client or your manager about the delay.

- **Positive Response:**

“Hello [Client/Manager's Name], I wanted to let you know about a delay in the project timeline due to [specific reason]. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. To minimize the impact, I'm implementing [solution or adjustment], and I expect to have it completed by [new date]. Please feel free to reach out if you have questions, and thank you for your understanding.”

- **Negative Response:**

“Hi [Client/Manager's Name], the project is going to be late. There have been a few issues that held things up, so it won't be ready by the original deadline. I can't give a new completion date right now, but I'll let you know when I have more information.”