Bridge4Mothers
PSL Programme — Personal, Social and Learning-to-Learn Competencies

MODULE 5 —

Positive Communication & Assertiveness

Co-funded by the European Union

Topics Covered

Positive communication helps learners express ideas clearly, listen actively and participate with confidence and respect.

1

Active listening

Giving full attention and checking understanding

2

Respectful interaction

Communicating with kindness, clarity and openness

3

Assertiveness

Expressing needs, opinions and boundaries confidently

4

Clear expression

Organising ideas and choosing simple, direct language

5

Body language

Using tone, posture and non-verbal signals thoughtfully

6

Emotional awareness

Recognising emotions before responding

7

Digital etiquette

Communicating safely and respectfully online

8

Collaboration

Using communication to strengthen teamwork and inclusion

This module supports learners to communicate with greater clarity, confidence and empathy in learning, work, family and digital environments.

Introduction to Positive Communication

Positive communication means sharing and receiving information in ways that are clear, respectful and constructive.

- Good communication combines speaking, listening, body language and emotional awareness.
- It helps people understand needs, expectations and different points of view before reacting.
- Clear communication reduces misunderstandings and supports trust, confidence and participation.
- Positive communication is a skill that can improve through practice, feedback and reflection.

Listen • Express • Connect

Active Listening & Understanding

Active listening means giving full attention, checking meaning and showing the speaker that their contribution matters.

Active listening habits

1. **Focus**
   Reduce distractions and give the speaker your attention.
2. **Clarify**
   Ask open questions when something is unclear.
3. **Reflect**
   Summarise key points to check understanding.
4. **Allow space**
   Avoid interrupting or preparing your answer too quickly.

Helpful phrases

1. **“Can you explain?”**
   Invite clarification without judgement.
2. **“Have I understood?”**
   Check that your interpretation is accurate.
3. **“I hear your point.”**
   Show respect before sharing another view.
4. **“What would help?”**
   Move from listening towards practical support.

Listening well is often the first step towards solving a communication problem.

Clear & Respectful Expression

Clear expression helps people understand what we think, need or propose without creating unnecessary tension.

Clear communication

1. **Simple language**
   Use direct words and avoid unnecessary complexity.
2. **One idea at a time**
   Break longer messages into clear points or steps.
3. **Specific examples**
   Explain what you mean with concrete information.
4. **Check understanding**
   Ask whether the message was clear or needs explanation.

Respectful communication

1. **Use “I” statements**
   Describe your experience without blaming another person.
2. **Choose tone carefully**
   A calm tone can make difficult messages easier to hear.
3. **Separate person & problem**
   Focus on the issue rather than personal criticism.
4. **Respect boundaries**
   Be clear while protecting dignity and privacy.

Clear communication is not saying more; it is making the message easier to understand.

Assertiveness & Confidence

Assertiveness means expressing opinions, needs and limits clearly while also respecting the rights and needs of others.

Assertive habits

1. **State your need**
   Explain what information, support or change would help.
2. **Set boundaries**
   Say no or request a change respectfully when needed.
3. **Ask directly**
   Request clarification instead of guessing or remaining silent.
4. **Own your view**
   Share your opinion without attacking or apologising for existing.

Confidence-building

1. **Prepare**
   Think about the main point before a difficult conversation.
2. **Start small**
   Practise speaking up in lower-pressure situations first.
3. **Use steady language**
   Keep sentences calm, specific and realistic.
4. **Reflect**
   Notice what worked and what you want to improve next time.

Assertive communication is confident and respectful — not passive and not aggressive.

Body Language & Emotional Awareness

Communication is shaped not only by words but also by tone, facial expression, posture, timing and emotional state.

Positive non-verbal signals

1. **Open posture**
   Use a relaxed position that supports respectful interaction.
2. **Appropriate eye contact**
   Adapt eye contact to comfort, culture and context.
3. **Calm tone**
   Notice volume, pace and tone when emotions are strong.
4. **Attentive signals**
   Use nodding or short responses to show that you are listening.

Emotional awareness

1. **Notice**
   Recognise emotions before they shape your response.
2. **Pause**
   Take a short moment when reactions feel intense.
3. **Name the need**
   Ask what information, space or support is needed.
4. **Adjust**
   Change your wording or timing when communication is not working.

A short pause can protect a conversation from a quick reaction.

Digital Communication Etiquette

Online communication needs the same respect as face-to-face communication, with extra attention to tone, privacy and clarity.

Good digital habits

1. **Clear subject or purpose**
   Make emails and messages easy to understand quickly.
2. **Professional tone**
   Avoid language that may feel abrupt, insulting or unclear.
3. **Check before sending**
   Review recipients, attachments and personal information.
4. **Respect timing**
   Consider whether the message is urgent and when a reply is realistic.

Online participation

1. **Protect privacy**
   Share only information that is appropriate and necessary.
2. **Use accessible formats**
   Keep instructions readable and easy to follow.
3. **Meeting etiquette**
   Mute when needed, listen actively and use chat respectfully.
4. **Avoid assumptions**
   Written messages lack tone, so ask for clarification when unsure.

Before sending, ask: Is it clear? Is it respectful? Is it necessary?

Managing Misunderstandings & Difficult Conversations

Misunderstandings are normal. A calm, structured response can protect relationships and help people move towards solutions.

When tension appears

1. **Pause**
   Slow the conversation before emotions take over.
2. **Clarify**
   Ask what the other person meant instead of assuming.
3. **Listen**
   Give each person time to explain their perspective.
4. **Name the issue**
   Describe the problem clearly and without personal blame.

Move towards resolution

1. **Identify needs**
   Ask what each person needs to move forward.
2. **Find common ground**
   Look for shared goals or points of agreement.
3. **Choose a next step**
   Agree on a realistic action, responsibility or boundary.
4. **Review**
   Check later whether the solution is working.

The goal is not to win the conversation — it is to understand the issue and move forward respectfully.

Positive Communication in Everyday Life

Communication skills support learning, work, family relationships, digital participation and collaboration.

Positive communication grows when we listen actively, express ourselves clearly, communicate assertively and remain open to different perspectives.

1

Which communication habit would I like to strengthen?

2

What helps me speak with more confidence and clarity?

3

What can I do this week to listen or communicate more positively?

Practise • Reflect • Adjust



Co-funded by
the European Union

BRIDGE4MOTHERS

Cradle

IMPACT GRID

Bulgarian Digital Cluster

NEXUS EDUCATION



Bridge4Mothers **© 2026 by** *Bridge4Mothers Erasmus+ VET KA210* **is licensed under** *Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International*

Disclaimer: *Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.*

2025-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000359232