

FSKDIG003

Use digital technology for non-routine workplace tasks

Learner Guide



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Unit of Competency

Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use digital technology to undertake non-routine workplace tasks, such as, operating machinery with computerised settings, entering text into a scanning device, collecting data to construct tables, graphs and charts in a spreadsheet, and measuring, recording and interpreting data using digital equipment.

An individual performing these tasks works independently and uses familiar support resources as needed.

This unit applies to individuals who use, or are preparing to use, digital skills to complete workplace activities. This includes existing workers and individuals preparing for employment through vocational education and training. This unit should be integrated and contextualised with vocational training to support achievement of vocational competency.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Unit Mapping Information

Supersedes and is equivalent to FSKDIG03 Use digital technology for routine workplace tasks.

Pre-requisite Unit

None stated

Unit Sector

Digital Technology

Performance Criteria

Element

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Prepare to use digital technology for non-routine work task | 1.1 Identify nature and scope of non-routine workplace task that requires the use of digital technology
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Foundation Skills

This section describes language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills incorporated in the performance criteria that are required for competent performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Assessment Requirements

Performance Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including evidence of the ability to:

- Use digital technology to complete at least three non-routine workplace tasks with different required outcomes and in accordance with workplace procedures.

During the above, the candidate must demonstrate use of the main features and functions of selected digital technology and application of security protocols.

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate knowledge to complete the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit, including knowledge of:

- Outcomes of relevant non-routine workplace tasks using digital technology
- Types of digital technology – software and hardware – commonly used in the workplace, their purposes and their uses
- Legislation or policies relevant to the use of workplace technology
- Workplace procedures for safely accessing and using digital technology
- Techniques to synthesise relevant information and instructions from various sources
- Relevant ethical and security practices applicable to use of digital technology for non-routine workplace tasks
- Conventions of online etiquette
- Strategies to review and improve performance.

Assessment Conditions

Competency is to be assessed in the workplace, a workplace simulated environment or a vocational training context.

Skills must be demonstrated using non-routine tasks that reflect those typically found in a workplace.

The following resources are to be made available:

- Digital technology required to complete the performance evidence
- Workplace procedures required to complete the performance evidence
- Own familiar support resources.

Assessors must:

- Satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards, and
- Have sound knowledge of the ACSF, and
- Have demonstrable expertise, knowledge and skills in the vocational contextualisation and assessment of digital technology, and
- Have completed the following or equivalent:
 - TAESS00009 Address Foundation Skills in Vocational Practice Skill Set; or
 - a higher level education qualification, such as:
 - TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice (and its equivalent TAE70111); or
 - Bachelor of Education, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Education, or higher. This may include qualifications relating to TESOL, adult education or vocational education.

Links

Companion Volume Implementation Guide is found on VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=f572fe10-a855-4986-9295-3852c771f178>

1. Prepare to use digital technology for non-routine task

- 1.1. Identify nature and scope of non-routine workplace task that requires the use of digital technology
- 1.2. Identify purpose of task and set the required outcome
- 1.3. Select and organise appropriate digital technology required for task
- 1.4. Locate and interpret routine workplace information and terminology associated with technology, and relevant safety procedures



1.1 – Identify nature and scope of non-routine workplace task that requires the use of digital technology

1.2 – Identify purpose of task and set the required outcome

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Summarise a non-routine workplace task, identifying the nature and scope and purpose of the task.

What are non-routine workplace tasks?

All roles within the workplace will consist of regular, routine tasks which are performed consistently. There will also be tasks which are not performed regularly; this might include tasks which are not required to be carried out often, as well as new tasks which haven't been performed yet. These can be referred to as non-routine tasks. Non-routine tasks will be individual to each workplace; what is a regular task for one workplace may be a 'once in a blue moon' task for another.

Non-routine tasks could include:

- Operating machinery with computerised settings
- Entering text into a scanning device
- Collecting data to construct tables, graphs, and charts in a spreadsheet
- Measuring, recording and interpreting data using digital equipment.

Carrying out a task analysis

A task analysis should be performed for each non-routine task your workplace intends to carry out. This analysis will require you to review the task in full, identifying the personnel who will perform the task, the conditions in which the task will be carried out, and any resources which will be required. Any associated hazards should also be identified, followed up with the appropriate risk controls. All of these steps are crucial in a task analysis, but this unit will focus on the use of digital technology for non-routine tasks, and so will not explore each step in depth.

To identify the digital technology which will be required for non-routine tasks, you will need to:

- Identify the nature and scope of the task
- Identify the purpose of the task.

Identifying the nature and scope of non-routine tasks

To ensure that you select the most appropriate digital technology, you will need to identify the nature and scope of the task at hand. This will include factors such as how long the task will take, how many staff members will be involved, and what resources will be required.



Identifying the nature and scope of non-routine task might be a difficult process as they are likely to be unfamiliar, but there are some processes that you can follow to identify the key information.

To identify the nature and scope of non-routine tasks, you should:

- Discuss the task with your colleagues
- Carry out a risk assessment
- Consider the environment in which the task will be carried out
- Review suggested procedures.

For tasks which are being carried out for the first time, you might find that the anticipated nature and scope changes as time goes on. This is not uncommon, but you should ensure that the correct steps are taken to ensure that the appropriate time and resources are allocated to ensure that the task can be performed safely and successfully. You might have to postpone tasks if this isn't possible immediately.

Identifying the purpose of the task

It's also important to identify the reasons why a non-routine task is being carried out. From this, you will be able to determine the desired outcome of the task, and the types of digital technology which will help you to reach this.

To identify the purpose of non-routine tasks, it will be a good idea to communicate with those who have some relevant experience. This doesn't have to include experience with the specific task directly; it could also be experience in the general area, or just in your workplace on the whole. Communicating with others in your workplace will allow you to seek their guidance and opinions, and make it possible to apply this to learn more about the task at hand and what the intended end goal is.

Identifying required outcomes

Identifying the required outcome(s) of a task will make it easier to determine the purpose of it being carried out. For example, if you are required to collect data which will be transferred into a table or chart, it will be beneficial for you to understand how this data will be used going forward. This will allow you to better perform the task, knowing what the preferred outcome is.

Required outcomes will differ depending on the type of task you are carrying out.

Some examples include:

- Rectify errors or address an identified issue
- Update resources or software
- Improve employee performance
- Improve organisation
- Train staff to use digital equipment.



1.3 – Select and organise appropriate digital technology required for task

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify steps they would follow to organise digital technology for use.

What is digital technology?

Digital technology has changed the workplace, allowing for remote communication, access to advanced software, etc.; you would be hard pushed to find a workplace that doesn't make use of digital technology in some shape or form. This means that having a workforce equipped with the appropriate skills is crucial. Having skills in digital technology means that you can use technology such as computers, tablets, phones and switchboards to perform a range of routine and non-routine tasks, like sending emails, setting up conference calls, operating software and using social media, instant messaging, video and audio.

Types of digital technology used in the workplace can be divided into two sections:

- Software
- Hardware.

Software refers to the programs which allow a computer to function. It is a general term, but is mostly used when referring to applications and programs which run on a device.

Hardware refers to the physical components or devices of a system. For example, computer hardware would include the monitor, the keyboard, the mouse, etc. Hardware can also cover external components such as a USB stick or a CD.



Selecting digital technology

Whilst technology has no doubt improved work processes in many different ways, having an abundance of options available can make it difficult to select the most appropriate for your purpose. You will need to refer back to the outcomes which you previously identified, and consider which technologies will best help you to reach these.

There are a number of additional steps which you can take to identify the most appropriate technologies for your task.

For example:

- Ask managers or supervisors which are the most appropriate digital technologies to use
- Ask colleagues for their recommendations, advice and tips
- Consult individuals external to your organisation
- Research digital technologies online
- Try different digital technologies to see what works for you.

Arguably the most effective method of identifying appropriate digital technologies for a task is simple trial and error. Remember that what works for your colleagues might not work for you, while some previously appropriate technologies may fail to move with the times and eventually turn out to be inappropriate to the task you need to complete.

Consider the following examples:

Task	Digital technology suggestions	Advantages of using digital technology
Communicating with colleagues or supervisor	Instant messaging	It is instant, it saves time, you can receive/respond immediately, you don't have to meet in person
Conducting a conference or meeting	Video conference	It is conducted in real-time, the video and audio reproduces a face-to-face meeting but without the need for physical attendance
Contacting a client	Email	It is delivered immediately, you can access contacts from your computerised address book, it saves cost – paper, printing, postage, etc.
Taking meeting minutes	Dictaphone, foot pedal, computer and keyboard	It allows the transcript of the meeting to be produced at a later time, and the audio recording can be listened to repeatedly as required to produce accurate notes

Organising digital technology

Once you have selected the appropriate digital technology, you will need to take the correct steps to ensure that it is accessible and available when you need it. Most of the technology needed for non-routine tasks will likely also be used for routine tasks, so don't expect that it will be available just because the task is not often performed. You will need to determine how the technology you need is utilised on a daily basis. Where is it located? Who is using it? If your workplace has limited resources, you will need to consider who else requires access to the technology at the same time as you do.

Planning and organising in advance is the best way to ensure that you have access to the technology you need, when you need it. Where it is possible, you should reserve the technology you need, considering the day(s) and time you will need it, ensuring that others in your workplace are happy with this. This might be done formally, via a booking process which your organisation has in place. Alternatively, reservations might be agreed informally, by simply asking your work team if anybody else will be using the technology during the day/time that you need access to it.

This will work well if you have a small team, but may not be effective if there are a large number of team members who might forget the conversation when the time comes around.

You will also need to account for any accessibility factors. For example, some technologies such as phones, tablets, and laptops, might be password protected. You should identify any barriers such as these beforehand, to ensure that time is not wasted overcoming issues when the task itself should be in progress.

Items of technology often have different components which allow them to work and carry out a range of functions.

For example, computers require:

- Input devices such as the mouse and keyboard
- Output devices such as the monitor and speakers
- Storage devices such as CD drives and the hard disk drive.

It may fall under your responsibility to ensure that all the different components of the technology you are going to use have been gathered and installed (where appropriate).

Remember that preparation is key – you should consider any factors that might prevent the task from being performed successfully, and aim to address these before you begin.



1.4 – Locate and interpret routine workplace information and terminology associated with technology, and relevant safety procedures

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Source workplace information and correctly interpret this by summarising the key points.

Workplace information

In order to perform workplace tasks, both routine and non-routine, safely and to the best of your ability, you will need to make use of a variety of different information.

Types of workplace information may include:

- Messages (email, instant messenger, etc.)
- Letters
- Reports
- Product information
- Statistics.



Locating workplace information

Locating workplace information is likely to be your first hurdle, particularly if you work within a large organisation. Information might be vast, and much of it might be unfamiliar to you if you have not dealt with it before. You should decide which type of information is going to be useful first. This will avoid you having to rifle through an abundance of information with no direction. For example, if the task involves using machinery or equipment which has not been used before or is rarely used, then a good place to start would be a user manual. This type of information should be stored with the equipment itself, or in a designated place (digital or manual) with other similar information.

If you are unsure about where the information you need is stored, then you should communicate with your colleagues. Your organisation should have an effective storage system in place for all types of information, but different individuals within the workplace might have knowledge on certain files or storage areas. For example, a worker within HR should be aware of where information such as workers details and contract of employments are filed, but may not be aware of where the company's most recent sales report is located.

Interpreting information

Once you have located the information you need, you will then need to use this in order to prepare for and carry out the selected non-routine task. Interpreting information means gaining a good understanding of the information and being able to draw out the key points. For example, if you have accessed statistics on sales figures in order to produce a chart or graph, you will need to read and understand the key figures to then transfer these accurately into your new document.

When interpreting information related to technology, you should be looking to determine:

- Specific capabilities and functions (and if these are appropriate to your task)
- How it should be used
- Any restrictions in place
- If you are authorised and/or trained to use it.

In some cases, you might be required to communicate with tech experts. This is advisable if you are dealing with digital technology for the first time. It's better to communicate with the right people first and clarify any questions rather than contact them when something goes wrong later down the line.

Workplace terminology

Workplace terminology is the body of words used specifically within a profession or area. It may include phrases, expressions, or choice of words that are commonly used in that field. A good example is the medical profession, which uses words based on specialist knowledge as well as short forms of words for medical conditions, medication, forms, etc.

Workplace terminology is often referred to as jargon because only certain people understand its meaning. Because of this, it can often be a barrier to communication. Furthermore, with instant messaging, social media, e-mail and video communication being commonly used in the workplace, it is even easier to use slang, short-forms and jargon.

You can interpret workplace terminology by:

- Using internet search engines
- Using a specialist dictionary for that profession, which can often be accessed online
- Asking your supervisor to explain the meaning
- Looking it up/expanding your knowledge of terminology using workplace policies, guidance and training
- Asking colleagues (if appropriate).



2. Perform non-routine workplace task using digital technology

- 2.1.** Interpret and follow routine information and instructions from a range of sources to access and use digital technology required for task
- 2.2.** Apply knowledge or skills to adapt instructions to suit changes or requirements in the workplace
- 2.3.** Comply with workplace procedures and security protocols relevant to using digital technology in completing task



2.1 – Interpret and follow routine information and instructions from a range of sources to access and use digital technology required for task

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Carry out research to determine how to access and use one type of digital technology.

Accessing and using digital technology

To successfully use digital technology, you first need to know how to access it. Access can be prohibited in a number of ways. For example, as discussed before, some technologies can be password protected to prevent unauthorised use. In some cases, access might be physically prevented, for example, if the technology is already being used or is stored on a different site. To ensure that you have access to the technology you need, you will need to take into consideration a number of different factors.

This could include:

- Login details, including passwords
- Other people's details, such as e-mail address, social media addresses/account names, telephone numbers, etc.
- Additional requirements for using the technology, for example, the internet or additional hardware components
- The availability of the digital technology you have chosen
- Knowledge of how certain equipment works
- The cost of using digital technology.



The above list includes only examples of considerations you might need to make in order to ensure access to the technology you need. You will need to identify your specific requirements, and determine anything which could potentially prevent successful access and use of your chosen technology.

Once potential obstacles to access have been identified, you can begin to determine how these can be addressed. Some obstacles will be easier to resolve than others. For example, if your chosen technology is being used elsewhere, you can simply choose another time or day to carry out your task according to availability. On the other hand, if you are unaware of how to use the technology, you may need to spend some time accessing and familiarising yourself with a range of sources to help you along.

To identify the information required to address any obstacles, you will need to:

- Consult managers and supervisors
- Consult and follow the directs of information technology specialists both internal and external to your organisation
- Consult colleagues

- Consult and follow the directions in manuals and handbooks for hardware and software
- Read official manufacturers' websites for further instructions
- Call troubleshooting hotlines and follow the instructions you are given
- Read and engage with internet forums and social media
- Read online, newspaper and magazine articles.

Using digital technology

Let's consider an example:

Using e-mail

When using e-mail, you may need to establish the following information in order to access it:

- Firstly, you will require access to the internet to use e-mail. You, therefore, need to ensure your workplace has internet access or, if, for example, you are working away from the office, ensure that wherever you are working has access to the internet. You can also access the internet using alternative methods such as personal hotspots. These will allow you to use the internet on a device such as a laptop using the connection from your mobile phone
- You will then need to determine if there is a cost to using this technology. If you are using the internet within your workplace, your employer will be paying the cost of the internet, telephone bills, etc. However, if you are working from outside of the office, you need to think about whether where you are working has free internet access or whether internet access is on a paid basis only
- You should also consider what e-mail programme/provider your workplace uses and whether there will be any obstacles to accessing this
- Finally, before you can start, you need to ensure you know your own username and password in order to log into the e-mail programme. If you have never used a workplace e-mail before, your workplace may provide you with an e-mail address, password and username. You shouldn't need to use your personal e-mail address.



So, now that you have established how to access your workplace e-mail account, you need to think about what information you need in order to use this technology:

- Before you can begin, you need the e-mail addresses of who you need to contact. Does the programme have an internal address book? Or, do you need to find and make a note of the relevant e-mail addresses before you start typing any emails?

- Next, you need to type the e-mail by selecting the 'new e-mail' option within the programme. Before you can start typing, you need all of the information that you have gathered about the task so far, i.e. why are you emailing this person, what needs to be included the e-mail, what questions you might need to ask, etc. You need to know this information before you start the task, in order to complete it successfully
- After you have inserted a subject heading and the addressee's e-mail details, you can send the e-mail if it is completed
- If you have started typing an e-mail but need to move on to another task, you may wish to save the e-mail as a draft and come back to it later
- What if you have sent the e-mail, but now you're on holiday for two days. You may wish to set up an automatic response – so that anyone who e-mails you/or replies to your e-mail will receive an automatic message telling them you're out of the office and when you will be back, and, if necessary, leaving alternative contact details
- How do you do all of these things? The most important information you need to use technology will be found in the user manual/guidance for it. This is where you will find all of the answers to what you want to achieve, and more. A lot of programmes, such as an e-mail provider, have a 'help' option where you can access the user guide while in the programme. It is also much easier to search for what you need when using a digital manual/guide.



Most organisations employ dedicated ICT specialists to assist with issues of exactly this kind. If ever you lack information or have a query regarding how to access and use digital technology, the most effective course of action will be to speak to these professionals.

2.2 – Apply knowledge or skills to adapt instructions to suit changes or requirements in the workplace

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- List steps to follow when adapting instructions.

Adapting instructions

In some situations, you may be required to make changes to the instructions provided to suit your circumstances. This doesn't mean to change them entirely, and should never introduce any element of risk, but you will be looking to adapt them in order to cater for the requirements of your workplace, or to respond to any changes to processes.

Why might adaptations be required?

There are many different reasons why instructions may need to be adapted. For example, your workplace may not require certain steps to be followed, or you might have the expertise which allows you to use technology in a specific way which is different to current instructions.

When adapting instructions, you should follow these steps:

- Produce written documentation of your adaptations. This will provide evidence of the work you have carried out, and may provide a good template for others in the future if the same adaptations are required
- Ensure that you are not compromising safety. With most digital technology, there should be minimal risk to personal safety, but you should take this into consideration to ensure that any necessary precautions remain in place
- Ensure that you are not compromising security. Security is probably the most prevalent risk when working with digital technology. Your workplace will have the relevant security processes in place, and these should not be affected by how you use the technology available. If you are ever unsure of whether adaptations might pose a security risk, communicate with the relevant personnel to make sure. Failing to do this could put company data at risk, including the privacy of all employees and customers
- Communicate with different personnel. There will likely be a number of different people you will need to consult before you make any adaptations to instructions. This could include supervisors or managers, tech experts, or your team members. Whilst you may be able to work on your own initiative to determine when it is appropriate to adapt instructions, you should ensure that all the relevant people are aware of your intended steps before you go ahead.



Synthesising information

When adapting instructions, you will need to take into account information from a range of different sources and ensure that this is reflected in your final product. This process is referred to as synthesising. Synthesising the relevant information will make it possible to draw key points from different sources, allowing you to produce instructions which are competent and safe.

Synthesising information can be a tricky process; you will need to develop the ability to read and understand information from different sources and draw links and comparisons between them.

Here are some steps to follow when synthesising information:

- Access and read a range of relevant information
- Make notes when reading
- Aim to identify common themes or ideas.



2.3 – Comply with workplace procedures and security protocols relevant to using digital technology in completing task

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify a workplace procedure and a security protocol which they would need to consider when using a digital technology of their choice in the workplace.

Following workplace procedures and security protocols

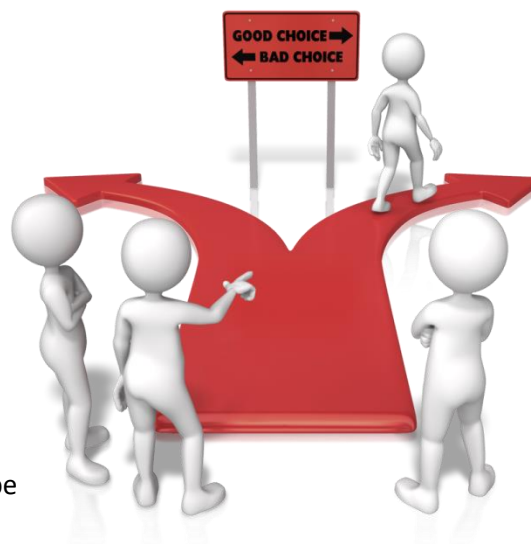
Workplace procedures provide formal guidance for how to perform tasks. They will take into consideration best practice from experience, as well as relevant legislative requirements in order to provide guidelines for safe and effective work practices.

All workplace procedures should be documented and filed in the appropriate place to allow reference whenever is needed.

They may be found in documentation such as:

- Workplace policies
- Regulations and/or legislation
- Habit/standard procedure within your workplace.

Workplace procedures can also be discovered by communicating with experienced staff members. Often the best way to familiarise ourselves with best practice is through performing the tasks a number of times, and so employees who have performed the procedure before will be a good source of information.



Examples of specific procedures you may need to consider cover a wide range of areas and may include:

- Health and safety
 - e.g. how to use technology and equipment safely
- Security
 - e.g. the use of security software to detect viruses, rules about the storage of client's personal details electronically, etc.
- Content management rules
 - e.g. content you cannot use/refer to/write etc. when using social media, instant messaging or other online tools that the public may have access to – to control the image of the workplace

- Legislation
 - e.g. your workplace may have procedure relating to the use of material that belongs to someone else, especially in online environments
- Dispute or complaint procedures
 - e.g. how to deal with them
- Training procedures
 - e.g. workplace digital technology skills training – you may need to consult training materials before considering the use of certain technology.

Let us consider an example. Imagine that you have been asked to present sensitive financial data in a spreadsheet.

You might need to consider the workplace procedures relating to:

- Ensuring that sensitive data or information is stored and/or shared securely within the workplace
 - e.g. who should be allowed access to the information, whether it can be shared with personal devices, etc.
- Keeping your equipment up to date with the latest virus software, to stop the information being targeted by corrupt sources
- Selecting which programme should be used to present data
 - e.g. an Excel spreadsheet and how the document should be formatted
 - e.g. to ensure all documents follow a consistent style for your workplace.



The importance of following workplace procedures should not be understated. Such procedures are in place for a reason: because they have been tried and tested over the years and are effective. What's more, if you fail to adhere to these procedures, you risk making significant mistakes that could lead to confusion, conflict between colleagues, financial and reputational loss, and even security breaches.

As ever, if you are unsure about how to perform a task, or the specific procedures to follow, consult with the relevant personnel sooner rather than later. It's always better to check and make sure than to make mistakes which could have serious consequences down the line.

3. Finalise task

- 3.1. Determine and complete shut down or reset of technology in accordance with workplace procedures
- 3.2. Review performance against required outcomes
- 3.3. Evaluate and plan ways to improve performance



3.1 – Determine and complete shut down or reset of technology in accordance with workplace procedures

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Demonstrate how to shut down or reset a laptop or computer.

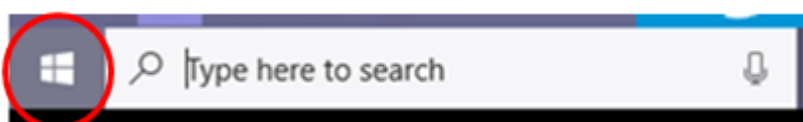
Shutting down or resetting technology

Once finished, you will be required to finalise the task by taking the correct steps to reset or shut down the technology you have been using. This should be a fairly simple process, but you will need to know how to do it properly to avoid losing your work or causing any damage to the device being used.

Let's look at an example:

To shut down a laptop or computer which runs on Windows software, you will take the following steps:

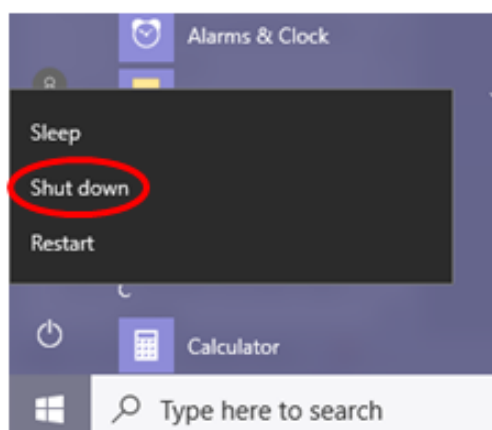
1. Head to the taskbar to select the Windows logo (usually located in the bottom, left-hand corner of the screen)



2. Click the power icon



3. Select shut down, or another option if preferred



The device will then shut down. If there are any applications left open when shut down is selected, a warning will usually appear to let you know, and give you the opportunity to save any work or close down windows which might have sensitive data. You should avoid relying on this though and always try to follow the correct steps to finalise the task beforehand.

There are alternative ways to shut down a device. For example, on a laptop, holding down the power button on the keyboard will usually initiate an immediate shut down. This method shouldn't be used if avoidable, though. You are likely to lose any work which hasn't been saved, and shutting down a laptop in this way repeatedly could cause harm to the device.



Following workplace procedures

When shutting down or resetting the device you have been using, you will need to follow any specific procedures which are outlined by your workplace. These might relate to the points already mentioned above, such as saving your work or following specific shut down procedures, or there might be additional considerations to make. The correct procedures to follow should be outlined to you beforehand, but if you are unsure, seek advice from the relevant person such as a supervisor or a tech expert, where available.

3.2 – Review performance against required outcomes

3.3 – Evaluate and plan ways to improve performance

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

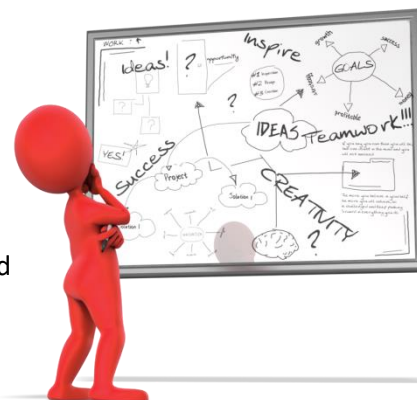
- Outline one method they could use to review their own performance
- List three aspects to consider when reviewing their performance.

Reviewing performance

Reviewing your performance will allow you to assess where you have and have not been successful. Whilst it can be difficult to admit where we have gone wrong or not done the best job, it is important to establish the weaknesses in your performance as well as your strengths. Establishing where you have been successful allows you to see how your skills have developed and continue to build on that success. Establishing where you have not been successful allows you to identify areas that need improvement, change, or development.

You may wish to consider the following methods of reviewing your performance:

- Ask for feedback. Your tutor, instructor, workplace supervisor, colleagues and fellow learners could all be asked to provide feedback, where relevant. Ask them what you did well, what you didn't do so well, and where they feel you could improve
- Keep records of your performance as you go along and review these, critically analysing them for areas where you felt you struggled and areas where you did not
- Carry out a self-reflection highlighting where you think you succeeded and failed and, how you intend to improve. This can be a useful document for yourself and for your workplace supervisor to retain a copy of, especially if you wish to progress your career in the future.



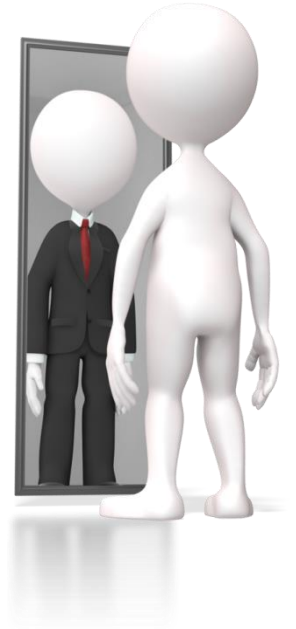
Improving performance

As mentioned above, the purpose of carrying out a review is to identify how your performance can be improved going forward. You should look to evaluate the results of your review, and determine how this information can be used to develop your skills.

There are many different ways in which you might want to improve your performance. Remember that development is a long term process, and you won't be able to address everything at once. It will be a good idea to focus on one or two areas of the process which you aren't entirely satisfied with; this will help to narrow your focus, and avoid you feeling like you don't know where to start. For example, if you needed to seek assistance when using a device, you could look to improve your knowledge on how to use the device so that you can save time and skip this step next time around.

You may wish to consider the following three aspects when reviewing your performance in order to determine how you can improve going forward:

- **Have you completed the task?** Do you think you chose the right tool for the task? If not, what technology would you use next time?
- **Have you managed your priorities?** You may be responsible for carrying out a number of regular tasks alongside a non-routine task, and you will need to ensure that none of these have been compromised. For example, you can access your diary records to show what you did and when, you can check what deadlines have passed, what tasks are still open, and even input your daily time details, i.e. how long it has taken you to complete a task. All of this is rich information when carrying out a review/developing your skills
- **Have you managed your progress regarding this task?** This can also be done using technology, i.e. computer programmes to assist you with this. For example, you can log the time it has taken to complete the task (this could be broken down into individual goals), any expenses you have incurred, and payments you have received, etc.



Each of these factors will help you to identify your current skills and successes as well as any areas where you may need to develop. Remember that by nature, non-routine tasks are not going to be a regular part of your job, and you won't be expected to have all of the required skills to perform these tasks when they do come around. However, by reviewing your performance when you do carry out non-routine tasks, you will be able to identify areas for improvement and ensure that you continue to develop your skills and knowledge each time around.

Summative Assessments

At the end of your Learner Workbook, you will find the Summative Assessments.

This includes:

- Skills Activity
- Knowledge Activity
- Performance Activity.

This holistically assesses your understanding and application of the skills, knowledge and performance requirements for this unit. Once this is completed, you will have finished this unit and be ready to move onto the next one – well done!

Appendices

Online etiquette

How we conduct ourselves online should be no different to how we do so in real life. It's important to recognise that the internet is an extension of society, and is not a different world in which there are no rules or expectations.

When you are required to use the internet for routine and non-routine tasks, you should ensure that you following the guidelines of your workplace, as well as any guidelines that you wish to set for yourself.

To ensure that you are practising appropriate etiquette online, you should take the following steps:

- Behave the same online as you do in public – remember that things such as hate speech and abuse are still not acceptable even though you cannot see the other person. It is unacceptable for you to engage in such behaviour as well as for you to be on the receiving end
- Avoid encouraging or engaging with abuse or harassment online – this includes reading, 'liking', or responding to any content which can be deemed as unacceptable. Remember that harassment online is increasingly being included in legislation across the world, the internet is no longer a place where this behaviour goes unnoticed
- Take into account cultural differences – the way that people use the internet will differ, and the same tolerance and respect should be applied to everyone you encounter online.



There are also etiquette practices which are specifically relevant to businesses.

Examples of these include:

- Respecting the privacy of all employees – no information about others should be passed on without their consent, or in a way which risks their privacy
- Sharing how information is going to be used – all customers as any other person(s) who engage with the company should be aware of how their information will be used going forward. For example, if this is going to be passed on to a third party, added to a mailing list, etc. All organisations have an obligation to be honest and transparent at all times.

FSKLRG009

Use strategies to respond to routine workplace problems

Learner Guide



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Unit of Competency

Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to identify routine workplace problems and plan strategies to respond to them.

An individual performing these tasks works independently and uses familiar support resources as needed.

This unit applies to individuals who use, or are preparing to use, learning skills to complete workplace activities. This includes existing workers and individuals preparing for employment through vocational education and training. This unit should be integrated and contextualised with vocational training to support achievement of vocational competency.

This unit is aligned to, but does not fully address, the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) learning core skill indicators .01 and .02 at level 3 in the workplace and employment domain of communication.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Unit Mapping Information

Supersedes and is equivalent to FSKLRG09 Use strategies to respond to routine workplace problems.

Pre-requisite Unit

None stated.

Unit Sector

Learning.

Performance Criteria

Element

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Plan to respond to workplace problems | 1.1 Identify predictable problems in the workplace and desired outcomes
1.2 Identify appropriate responses to predictable problems and resources required
1.3 Identify own role and role of others in resolving routine workplace problems |
| 2. Propose problem solving strategies | 2.1 Select a routine workplace problem to apply problem solving strategies
2.2 Identify internal and external factors contributing to the selected workplace problem
2.3 Apply suitable problem resolution practice to the situation
2.4 Assess and address potential barriers that may hinder problem solving process
2.5 Evaluate problem solving strategies and propose most appropriate |
| 3. Review problem solving strategies | 3.1 Seek feedback on proposed problem-solving strategy
3.2 Evaluate feedback and record
3.3 Revise strategies and make improvements as appropriate for future application |

Foundation Skills

This section describes language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills incorporated in the performance criteria that are required for competent performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Assessment Requirements

Performance Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including evidence of the ability to:

- Identify at least two routine workplace problems and propose appropriate problem-solving strategies
- Review and discuss the above strategies with workplace or training mentor or supervisor on at least one occasion.

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate knowledge to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including knowledge of:

- Routine problems relevant to workplace
- Common internal and external factors that may contribute to routine workplace problems
- Common workplace and personal barriers that may hinder the problem-solving process
- Range of strategies to respond to routine workplace problems
- Sources of advice and feedback
- Strategies to evaluate feedback and make modifications to proposed problem-solving strategy.

Assessment Conditions

Competency is to be assessed in the workplace, a workplace simulated environment or a vocational training context.

Skills must be demonstrated using routine texts or tasks that reflect those typically found in a workplace.

The following resources are to be made available:

- Own familiar support resources.

Assessors must:

- Satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards, and
- Have sound knowledge of the ACSF and performance features of the ACSF level being assessed, and
- Have demonstrable expertise, knowledge and skills in the vocational contextualisation and assessment of the core skill, learning, and
- Have completed the following or equivalent:
 - TAESS00009 Address Foundation Skills in Vocational Practice Skill Set; or
 - a higher level education qualification, such as:
 - TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice (and its equivalent TAE70111); or
 - Bachelor of Education, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Education, or higher. This may include qualifications relating to TESOL, adult education or vocational education.

Links

Companion Volume Implementation Guide is found on VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=f572fe10-a855-4986-9295-3852c771f178>

1. Plan to respond to workplace problems

- 1.1. Identify predictable problems in the workplace and desired outcomes
- 1.2. Identify appropriate responses to predictable problems and resources required
- 1.3. Identify own role and role of others in resolving routine workplace problems



1.1 – Identify predictable problems in the workplace and desired outcomes

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- List a range of routine problems that may arise within the workplace
- Suggest a preferred outcome for each of the listed problems.

Identifying workplace problems

A problem is a matter or situation that is unwelcome or harmful and needs to be dealt with or overcome. It could be a specific problem. For example, a financial problem that is clearly identifiable. Or, it could be a broader problem such as a lack of staff motivation. Moreover, a problem may be much wider, and several aspects may need to be identified to understand the overall situation.

If we apply the definition of 'problem' to a workplace setting, we can see that there are many routine workplace problems that may occur on a daily basis.

Think about your workplace. What routine problems do you experience?

Examples of routine problems which may be easily identifiable may include:

- Late payments
- Undelivered or late supplies
- Unmet deadlines
- Customer complaints
- Discrimination within the workplace
- Low staff performance
- Staff not following routine workplace rules, procedures or guidance
- Lack of communication between staff and senior management.



Some problems, by nature, will be easier to identify than others. For example, although there might be many causes, unmet deadlines will be clear to see as work will not have been completed by the arranged date. Other problems such as discrimination or a lack of communication might be more difficult to identify; workers may not want to discuss such situations, and so it might go unnoticed for a long period of time.

When identifying a problem, there are key questions you need to keep in mind:

- What is wrong with the situation as it is now?
- What is the ideal situation?
- What is stopping this from happening?
- How can I solve this?

Keep those questions in mind as you progress through this guide.

Considering desired outcomes

To ensure that you can respond appropriately to workplace problems, you should consider the preferred outcome. Where possible, this outcome should work in the interests of all involved parties. It will also need to be realistic; whilst it's inevitable to want the perfect resolution to any issues, this isn't always achievable. For example, if you have deadlines which have not been met, you can't go back in time to amend this, nor can you expect for work to be completed immediately without the proper planning. You will need to identify the best-case scenario according to the resources available to you.

Think about the problems listed above and consider the most desirable outcome. Do you think this would differ to the outcome which would be possible?

Bear in mind that achieving desired outcomes will not always be an immediate process. Resolving workplace problems may require time and the correct planning. Trying to rush towards a resolution is likely to lead to an undesirable outcome, and could even make the situation worse.



1.2 – Identify appropriate responses to predictable problems and resources required

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Outline an appropriate response to two different workplace problems and list the resources which would be required to implement each.

Responding to problems

Once you have identified the problem(s) evident in your workplace, you need to start thinking about the best way to respond to it. First, think about what you want to achieve. You may want to address or solve the problem, but ideally, you also need to think about how you can prevent the problem from coming back. This is the ideal outcome.

Then, when you have established the outcome that you are seeking, you need to think about how you are going to achieve it. As was mentioned previously, proper planning will be essential to resolving a problem. This is why a strategy is necessary – to develop and apply to the problem in order to achieve the preferred outcome.

A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term aim or resolution to a problem. There will likely be many different options of strategies available, and so you will need to investigate what is available to you, and what you think will work best.

Investigating strategies to resolve a problem may involve:

- Consulting with supervisors or senior management figures
- Speaking with staff members who are responsible for the issue
- Discussing potential approaches in a team meeting
- Communicating with those who the problem is impacting on, such as customers or suppliers
- Assessing past approaches of responding to problems.

Consider the following process:



To identify what response will work best and what process you need to be following, you need to think about what may be included in your strategy.

First, you need to analyse the problem in order to understand how you can solve it.

Think about the following questions which may apply to your problem:

- Why is there a problem?
- How did it happen/what caused it?
- What should be the ideal situation?
- Have there been any attempts to solve the problem in the past? If so, why did they fail? Were there any aspects that did work well?
- How do you usually solve problems you are faced with?
- Is there anyone with relevant experience in your workplace who you could ask for advice or opinion?
- Are you capable of managing this problem by yourself, or do you need assistance?
- If it is a large problem? If so, can it be broken down into smaller stages which can be approached individually?
- How can you make sure that this problem doesn't occur again? For example, is new or reinforced staff training required? Is a new workplace policy necessary?



Remember to be as objective as possible when analysing the problem. Being objective means that you are not influenced by personal feelings or opinions and instead only focus on facts when considering the problem.

That being said, sometimes a subjective approach may be helpful. For example, your own feelings and opinions may be relevant if you have faced a similar problem in the past. In that case, you could apply your experience to the problem, but you must first analyse the problem on its own merits as it may differ to the problem you faced before. Another example of where subjective views might be taken into account is if you think there is someone in your workplace with the relevant experience or knowledge who could give you their opinion or advice. However, remember to be careful with what advice you choose to take. Don't assume that their knowledge is correct.

Once you have answered these questions, you will have a much better idea of what the problem involves and therefore, what kind of strategy and response will work best.

Choosing a strategy

Think about all of the ways you can achieve a solution. List all of the options, even if you are not sure whether they will work. After doing this, you can assess the risks, positives, and negatives of each option to decide which course of action to take. This is a useful approach as not only does it reinforce your analytical, problem solving and writing skills, it also provides you with a comprehensive document which you can refer back to. For example, you may need to justify your choice of approach to your supervisor at a later date or, your first choice of option may not be successful and you may need to choose another from the list.

You need to consider how best to use this list of options. You could approach the problem by trying one strategy and then another, and another after that until you get it right. Or, you could apply one strategy, build on why it didn't work and then devise a new strategy based on the results. The second option is the best way to not only develop your own problem-solving skills but, to understand and solve the problem most effectively.

Consider your resources

When choosing an appropriate strategy, you must also take into consideration the resources which you have access to. This will likely have a large bearing on the options which are available to you. For example, if a deadline has not been reached, you cannot propose that workers take on overtime if these workers are on holiday.

It will be a good idea to draft a list of the resources which will be required for each strategy you have in mind for resolving the problem(s), and determine which of these you currently have access to, which you could gain access to, and which you wouldn't be able to access at all. This will make it possible to rule out strategies which aren't feasible, leaving you with only the options which are realistic for you to apply.



1.3 – Identify own role and role of others in resolving routine workplace problems

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Suggest a task which they could be responsible for when resolving a routine workplace problem
- Suggest a task which another person might be responsible for when resolving a routine workplace problem.

Identifying roles within problem resolution processes

Responses to workplace problems will need to be organised and strategic in order to be successful. A large part of this will rely on everyone knowing their part and what tasks they are expected to perform.

Roles within the resolution process could include:

- Communicating with internal personnel
- Communication with external personnel
- Completing the required documentation
- Mediating between parties
- Accessing additional resources.



The above list is not exhaustive, there will be many different roles required to resolve problems in the workplace, and these will likely differ for different types of problems too.

The first thing you will need to do is identify your own role in resolving workplace problems and what type of tasks this allows you to do. It's important that you never act outside of this role, not only will this mean you are going against workplace guidelines, but could also result in you risking the safety of yourselves and others.

Often enough, roles will be based on the capabilities, training and experience of individuals, so if you ever feel like something is outside of your abilities, don't hesitate to raise this with the appropriate person(s). Similarly, if there is a task which you believe you could do well, you might put yourself forward where appropriate. Delegating roles to those who have the capabilities to carry them out is beneficial to the workplace on the whole, ensuring that tasks get done well and that enthusiasm and morale is maintained for workers as they achieve goals.

The best way to identify your own role and that of others will be to communicate with your team members on a regular basis; doing this will allow you to determine which tasks others are taking on, and where you fit into the larger picture of the resolution process. Having a work team who have a good understanding of the overall process will also make it possible to lend a hand where necessary.

For example, if a colleague is off sick, you might be able to stand in for them if you are aware of their role and the expectations of this.

Your specific roles and responsibilities for resolving problems might also be outlined within your contract of employment or other formal documentation. You should have a copy of this in your own records, but it will be easily accessible if you communicate with the appropriate person in your workplace.

Remember that resolving problems will require teamwork. Although you might have different roles and responsibilities within the process, working collaboratively with your colleagues will be essential to successfully overcoming identified problems, understanding why they have occurred, and preventing them from occurring again in the future.



2. Propose problem solving strategies

- 2.1.** Select a routine workplace problem to apply problem solving strategies
- 2.2.** Identify internal and external factors contributing to the selected workplace problem
- 2.3.** Apply suitable problem resolution practice to the situation
- 2.4.** Assess and address potential barriers that may hinder problem solving process
- 2.5.** Evaluate problem solving strategies and propose most appropriate



2.1 – Select a routine workplace problem to apply problem solving strategies

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Select a workplace problem.

Identifying potential problems

Now that you know how to identify a workplace problem, you need to put that knowledge into practice. It isn't just a matter of identifying the problem itself. You need to identify the cause of the problem.

Consider the following example:

A customer, Mrs Jones, telephones your office to make a complaint. Mrs Jones says that the order she made still hasn't been delivered. She tells you that your colleague, Joe, took the order from her two weeks ago. She says that Joe told her he didn't work in the orders department but that he would make sure it was passed on to Sarah who does work in that department.

Let's explore the example in more detail. First, you need to identify the problem.

The initial problem is that a customer has made an order which hasn't been delivered. However, the problem could be more wide-ranging than it first appears. The customer may tell her friends or post a negative review of your workplace online. All of this could result in lost business.

Next, you need to identify the cause of the problem. When you do this, you might find that there is more than one problem. In other words, the cause itself might be another problem that you have to solve. For example, the order may not have been delivered because the item(s) is out of stock. Stock levels will need to be rectified before the customer's order can be delivered.



2.2 – Identify internal and external factors contributing to the selected workplace problem

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify possible internal and external factors which could contribute to a selected problem.

Factors contributing to workplace problems

To solve a problem successfully, you will need to gain a good understanding of the factors which have contributed to the problem occurring. You should consider both internal factors, that is what can be sourced directly to your workplace, as well as external factors, anything which has occurred as a result of influences outside of your workplace.

Let us continue with the example from Chapter 2.1 – Mrs Jones making a complaint about not receiving her order.

We established that the initial problem was that the customer was unhappy because the order had not been delivered. We also established that this could have been caused by poor workplace communication. Further on, the outcome of this problem could lead to further consequences such as a loss of business if the customer chooses to provide negative reviews based on this problem.

So, the initial problem looks simple – a customer didn't receive an order. However, to understand what the actual problem is, and to prevent further consequences, you need to establish what caused or contributed to the problem.

So, using the same example, what may have been the cause of this problem? Is it that Joe didn't tell Sarah about the order? If so, the cause might be a lack of workplace communication. Is it that Joe did tell Sarah, but she didn't follow normal procedure by logging the order into the system and then forgot about it? If so, this might be a problem with staff training. Or, did both employees do their jobs correctly, but there has been an issue with the stock levels which have not been updated on the system? Here there would be a problem with workplace systems. Have all other components run smoothly, but the delivery service has failed? If so, this would be a problem with the delivery service your workplace uses.

These potential causes can be split into internal and external factors:

Internal factors	External factors
Lack of workplace communication	Fault with delivery service
Inadequate staff training	
Faulty workplace systems	



Whilst external factors may be outside of your control to some extent, it's important that you take the appropriate steps to address these where ever possible. Problems are unlikely to get solved if you only take responsibility for causes which arise directly from your workplace.

Other external factors could include:

- Weather
- Legislative requirements/guidelines
- Technology
- The economy.



2.3 – Apply suitable problem resolution practice to the situation

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Outline one problem resolution practice which would be suitable for an identified problem.

Proposing problem solving strategies

Once you have identified the problem and established which major factors might be contributing to this, you now need to analyse the data that you have gathered. Consider questions such as, have you identified all of the problems? Are there any other contributing factors? Does the problem require further investigation?

For example, if you are trying to resolve communication problems, you should take into account all of the potential influencing factors, even if they might not seem to be important immediately. Have workers been informed of meetings taking place? Have workers been copied into emails with information about updates?

As has been identified previously, there might be many contributing factors to problems. These must be considered so that you can propose problem-solving strategies which are really going to be successful. Once you are satisfied with your analysis of the problem, you can start to propose problem-solving strategies.



Think of all the ways you could try to solve the example which was first presented in Chapter 2.1.

Your list may look something like this:

- A senior manager should telephone Mrs Jones to apologise, offer an explanation, and assure her that the delivery will be made and within what time frame – this would address each issue raised in her complaint. It would also, hopefully, stop any negative reviews of the workplace
- If the cause was a lack of communication, this needs to be addressed as well. Your strategy here might include briefing all staff about the importance of communication, putting new training in place regarding communication skills, enforcing any workplace policies regarding communication, etc.
- If the cause was using incorrect procedure, this problem will also need its own strategy. It would be very similar to the above policy, for communication problems
- Does your workplace need to implement new procedures to ensure this doesn't happen again?
- Do staff require extra training?

Before you choose which practices to implement, you will need to assess the positives, negatives, and risks of each option. It may be that a combination of the options will work best or, there may be one that would solve the whole problem.

2.4 – Assess and address potential barriers that may hinder problem solving process

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- List two barriers which could prevent a problem-solving practice from being successful
- Suggest one way to address the barrier identified.

Identifying barriers to the problem solving process

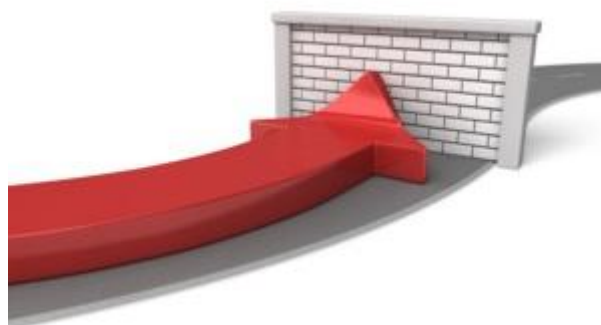
As the saying goes; “a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor”. When responding to workplace problems, you are likely to come across different barriers which prevent you from reaching your final solution.

Ideally, barriers should be identified during the process of selecting the most appropriate strategies. This will allow you to prepare how to overcome these barriers before you go on to implement your chosen strategies. However, it might not always be possible to identify barriers pre-emptively; this might be because they are not obvious to you at such an early stage, or because they develop as the strategy is implemented.

The specific barriers which you face will depend on the type of problem you are dealing with and the strategy or strategies you are choosing to implement.

Some common barriers include:

- Unavailable resources
- Poor communication between workers
- Unwillingness or resistance of workers
- A particularly complicated problem
- Inexperience of workers.



As before, the above list is not exhaustive. Potential barriers are wide-ranging; you will need to be prepared to face a number of obstacles at all stages of the problem-solving process.

Personal barriers

It also possible that factors personal to you could have an impact on the success of the problem-solving process. For example, you might not have the required training, experience, or knowledge to develop or implement effective strategies. Alternatively, you may not have the time to commit to the process if you already have a heavy workload. As with the barriers we have already identified, it's important that any personal barriers are identified and addressed where ever possible.

Addressing barriers to the problem solving process

Once you have identified any barriers to the problem-solving process, you will need to take the correct steps to ensure that they do not prevent the process from being successful.

Let's follow on with the example first presented in Chapter 2.1.

Imagine that after exploring the problem further, you find that Sarah had failed to process the delivery using the newly introduced system, and so it hadn't been processed at all. When communicating with Sarah, you find that she is reluctant to use the new system as she thinks the previous one is better. In this situation, Sarah's unwillingness to learn and adopt the new system is acting as a barrier to you successfully resolving the problem, and could also pose the risk of similar problems in the future.

Here are some examples of how this barrier could be addressed:

- Initiate communication between Sarah and senior staff members
- Plan one-on-one training for Sarah to help her to understand the benefits of the new system
- Assign a mentor for Sarah to ensure that she is following the new system.

Such situations can be challenging to overcome, but failing to address these barriers could be even more detrimental to long term progress.



2.5 – Evaluate problem solving strategies and propose most appropriate

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Make a list of questions they should ask to evaluate problem-solving strategies.

Evaluating strategies

At this point, you should have an idea of a number of possible strategies which you could apply to solve the problem(s) you have identified, including the potential barriers to these too. It will then be beneficial to evaluate these strategies in order to choose the one which will work the best.

It's important to remember there will likely not be a perfect strategy; as was identified previously, there may be barriers to overcome. What you will be looking for is a strategy which you are able to make work, with the resources you have available, in order to achieve the best outcome possible.

To evaluate your strategies, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- To what extent would the strategy address the problem?
- Do you have the resources required to implement the strategy?
- Are any barriers identified possible to overcome?
- Will the strategy help to prevent the problem from reoccurring?



Take your time to consider the above questions and any others which will allow you to determine any potential problems with your strategy, taking into account any barriers you previously identified.

3. Review problem solving strategies

- 3.1.** Seek feedback on proposed problem-solving strategy
- 3.2.** Evaluate feedback and record
- 3.3.** Revise strategies and make improvements as appropriate for future application



3.1 – Seek feedback on proposed problem-solving strategy

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify methods of seeking feedback on problem-solving strategies
- List different people they could seek feedback or advice from.

Seeking feedback

Seeking feedback is a crucial practice in all workplaces. It allows us to learn from the experience and skills of others, and use this to develop our own practices going forward. Seeking feedback is also important as it can be difficult to see ourselves how well we have performed or developed our skills in the same way an objective person could. Others are likely to be able to point out things we hadn't noticed or even don't want to admit.

You should always ask an appropriate person to provide you with feedback on the problem-solving strategy you have identified. Ideally, this feedback should be obtained before a strategy is implemented to give you the opportunity to make any necessary amendments from the feedback received.

Methods of seeking feedback may include:

- Via email
- Introducing a suggestion or feedback box
- Speaking with others during a meeting
- Through one-on-one conversations
- Asking relevant people to complete surveys.



You may be able to seek feedback from a variety of people:

- Trainers and tutors
- Your supervisor
- Your work colleagues
- Other course participants, if appropriate
- Managers/directors.

The most appropriate people to seek feedback from are those with the skills and knowledge to understand problem-solving in the workplace. This could be someone with specific knowledge relating to the problem(s) you are dealing with, or a more general understanding of problem-solving on the whole, for example. Alternatively, you might seek feedback from the people directly affected by the problem(s) you have identified. For example, if you have developed a strategy to combat a lack of workplace motivation, you may wish to seek feedback from workplace staff. What do they think to the strategy? Do they think this would help them to feel more motivated? If not, why not? You could seek this feedback through a survey, for example.

Finally, you may wish to speak to the people at the top of your workplace – the managers, directors, stakeholders, etc. Do they feel the strategy fits in with this workplace? Will it have an impact financially? Does it fit in with the aims of the workplace, e.g. ethically? Gaining approval from these individuals will put you in a good position to obtain further assistance at a later point if necessary.

Sometimes people will offer their feedback without you having to ask for it. However, it is very common for people to only give feedback about things that need to improve – people are sometimes not so forthcoming when it comes to offering feedback about good performance. Remember to ask them what parts of the strategy they think work well.

Do give consideration to all feedback that you receive – feedback is usually given with the intention to help improve performance. However, do not assume that the knowledge or advice given is necessarily correct. Seeking feedback from more than one person will give you a much wider pool of information and advice to draw from.



3.2 – Evaluate feedback and record

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- List a number of points to consider when evaluating feedback on problem-solving strategies
- Outline how and where they are required to record feedback in their workplace.

Evaluating feedback

Once you have gained feedback, it's important that this is not ignored or pushed to the side. You should try to evaluate the feedback, reviewing what key points have been made, and how this can be applied to improve your strategy.

You may wish to consider the following points:

- Are there any reoccurring points being made?
- Have any improvements or revisions to the strategy been suggested?
- Have any other recommendations been made?

Evaluations will be particularly beneficial if you disagree with any feedback you have received. Thinking practically about the points made in reference to the strategy will allow you to avoid taking feedback personally. Don't forget to look at where you have succeeded or obtained positive feedback. This is equally important when progressing your own skills and when altering your strategy.



Recording feedback

All feedback received should be recorded following an appropriate process. Some feedback may already be in written form, and you won't have to do anything other than store it in the correct place. Verbal feedback, on the other hand, will need to be recorded as soon as possible after, if not during, when it is received. Even if you have a great memory, pieces of information will likely be forgotten or missed if you wait too long to record feedback, and you may miss out on some really useful points. A record of all feedback will also serve as a written account which you or others in your workplace may refer to in the future if necessary. For example, if a similar problem occurs.

When you are recording any information, you are also developing your writing skills. Think carefully about which parts are the most important – Do any need emphasising/highlighting? Would it be beneficial to write a summary of the feedback? Etc. These are all critical writing skills which help you to engage with the feedback successfully.

How and where should you record feedback?**Consider the following:**

- Recording is now usually done and retained digitally, though your workplace may also request handwritten/paper records
- The recording should be done in a clear and concise document, detailing the feedback clearly so that it can then be applied to the strategy
- Keep a copy for yourself
- Provide a copy to your supervisor or trainer
- Ensure that it is filed correctly, using keywords so that it can be easily located in future.



3.3 – Revise strategies and make improvements as appropriate for future application

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Outline the steps required to revise strategies based on feedback received.

Revising strategies

The final stage of addressing workplace problems will be to use the feedback you have obtained and reviewed to revise your strategy. Remember that this may not always be necessary; if you obtained only positive feedback and there have been no other changes that warrant revision, then your strategy will be good to go!

That being said, it is likely that you will wish to reconsider or alter parts of your strategy in light of the feedback you received. Even if only the smallest of changes will be made, this will make your strategy more effective and more likely to achieve the desired outcome.

How might you revise your strategy? You should:

- Compare your strategy to the record of feedback you made
- Highlight the most important aspects that need revising
- Remove parts that do not work
- Replace with parts of feedback and advice that improve the policy (after analysing/checking for accuracy)
- If this strategy simply isn't going to be suitable, go back to the list you made and consider other strategies that might work in line with the feedback that has been given.



Re-work strategy

The act of re-working helps us to reinforce what we have learned from the feedback, and to further understand the strategy itself. As mentioned above, amendments don't have to be major to be significant. Small changes will be equally as important if they are going to help you to reach your desired outcome. Remember to keep a record of all revisions made, so that you know which document is the latest strategy.

Schedule revisions

The workplace is a dynamic and constantly evolving environment. New regulations and legislation may come into force, new employees may join the team who aren't aware of policies or workplace practices, and there are likely to be new goals to reach on a regular basis. As such, solving workplace problems is a consistent process for all organisations. Also, a changing workplace may mean that your strategy in regard to one problem needs updating because as things change, it may simply no longer work. This is why it is important to review your strategy over periods of time – it is best to schedule periodic reviews so that you do not forget.

Summative Assessments

At the end of your Learner Workbook, you will find the Summative Assessments.

This includes:

- Skills Activity
- Knowledge Activity
- Performance Activity.

This holistically assesses your understanding and application of the skills, knowledge and performance requirements for this unit. Once this is completed, you will have finished this unit and be ready to move onto the next one – well done!

FSKRDG010

Read and respond to routine workplace information

Learner Guide



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Unit of Competency

Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to interpret and respond to information in routine workplace texts in printed or digital formats, such as instruction manuals, reports, emails, brochures, work instructions, notices, web pages with data and policies.

An individual performing these tasks works independently and uses familiar support resources as needed.

This unit applies to individuals who use, or are preparing to use, reading skills to complete workplace activities. This includes existing workers and individuals preparing for employment through vocational education and training. This unit should be integrated and contextualised with vocational training to support achievement of vocational competency.

This unit is aligned to, but does not fully address, the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) reading core skill indicators .03 and .04 at level 3 in the workplace and employment domain of communication.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Unit Mapping Information

Supersedes and is equivalent to FSKRDG10 Read and respond to routine workplace information

Pre-requisite Unit

None stated

Unit Sector

Reading

Performance Criteria

Element

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Prepare to read routine workplace text | 1.1 Identify reason for reading text and explicit questions to be answered
1.2 Identify text type
1.3 Identify audience and purpose of text
1.4 Identify distinguishing text features |
| 2. Interpret information in text | 2.1 Use structure and features of information to navigate text and locate relevant information
2.2 Identify and interpret workplace terminology in texts
2.3 Use reading strategies to interpret relevant information and construct meaning
2.4 Use critical reading skills to analyse information |
| 3. Check understanding and identify response to text | 3.1 Check that information in text has been correctly understood
3.2 Use information to identify appropriate response
3.3 Reflect on text effectiveness in meeting intended text purpose. |

Foundation Skills

This section describes language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance but not explicit in the performance criteria.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Assessment Requirements

Performance Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including evidence of the ability to:

- Interpret and identify appropriate response to information in at least two different routine workplace texts.

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate knowledge to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including knowledge of:

- Reasons for reading routine workplace texts and explicit questions to be answered through reading
- Purpose and uses of routine workplace texts
- Distinguishing features of routine workplace texts
- Some specialised workplace terminology in routine workplace texts
- Techniques to navigate routine workplace information using text structure and features
- Formal and informal text register of writing
- Techniques to self-monitor reading for sense and accuracy
- Reading strategies that support the interpretation of information in routine workplace texts
- Critical reading techniques to analyse routine workplace information in familiar texts
- Suitable responses to routine workplace information.

Assessment Conditions

Competency is to be assessed in the workplace, a workplace simulated environment or a vocational training context.

Skills must be demonstrated using routine information and texts that reflect those typically found in a workplace.

The following resources are to be made available:

- Own familiar support resources
- Dictionary or other references to determine the meaning of unknown words
- Routine workplace information.

Assessors must:

- Satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards, and
- Have sound knowledge of the ACSF and performance features of the ACSF level being assessed, and
- Have demonstrable expertise, knowledge and skills in the vocational contextualisation and assessment of the core skill, reading, and
- Have completed the following or equivalent:
 - TAESS00009 Address Foundation Skills in Vocational Practice Skill Set; or
 - a higher level education qualification, such as:
 - TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice (and its equivalent TAE70111); or
 - Bachelor of Education, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Education, or higher. This may include qualifications relating to TESOL, adult education or vocational education.

Links

Companion Volume Implementation Guide is found on VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=f572fe10-a855-4986-9295-3852c771f178>

1. Prepare to read routine workplace text

- 1.1. Identify reason for reading text and explicit questions to be answered
- 1.2. Identify text type
- 1.3. Identify audience and purpose of text
- 1.4. Identify distinguishing text features



1.1 – Identify reason for reading text and explicit questions to be answered

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Determine why they need to read workplace texts
- Use explicit questions to obtain answers about workplace texts.

Workplace communications

In any occupation, you will need to be able to communicate with others; this will be done through spoken words and written communications. This unit will address written communications and specifically using and responding to texts.

A workplace will have and use a variety of texts to communicate and carry out business.

Written texts are used to:

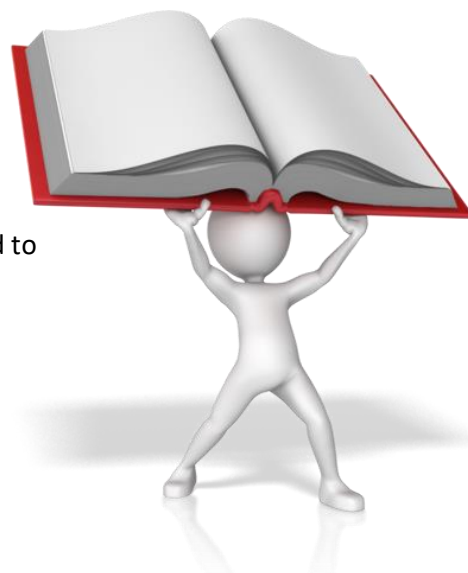
- Provide physical evidence of something; for example, workplace procedures, instructions, employee notices, customer contracts and invoices
- Act as a reference point for information; for example, business plans, equipment manuals, checklists, work rotas and work policies
- Create workplace records; for example, customer orders, stock lists, work logs, completed work forms and job role descriptions
- Communicate a consistent message; for example, terms and conditions of sale, emergency procedures, health and safety instructions, and business strategies.

Reasons for reading texts

In your work role, you will have a defined job role and set of tasks. These tasks may require you to access and read different texts; these texts should be made clear to you at the start of your employment or when a change in your work occurs. You will need to be able to recognise the texts that apply to you and how you need to respond to them.

These texts will be used to provide you with:

- Guidance
- Information
- Instruction.



You may need to obtain the answers to specific questions to perform your work role, and it will be necessary to make sure you have access to the texts that you require.

When using written texts, you will need to make sure that you access the most current and up-to-date versions that are available to you. Some texts may apply for a long period of time, such as workplace policies or legislative guidance. However, others will be replaced or updated on a frequent basis, such as work task lists and rosters.

Asking questions

When you read and respond to workplace texts, you may need to determine additional needs to carry out your work functions, for example, a work instruction to prepare a customer order may not be clear on all the details that you need to know, such as who needs to receive the order or the time it needs to be completed by.

If there are details missing, you will need to ask those responsible the questions that will give you the information you need. Questions must be clear, specific and to the point. Explicit questions communicate what you need to know; they are not open to misinterpretation and are easily understood.

Explicit questions will be:

- Questions that are simply stated and clear in their use of language, such as 'What process will I need to follow to complete this task?'
- Questions that require a definitive answer, such as 'What time do you need this to be done by?'
- Questions that have a direct purpose in relation to your need, such as 'Who will I need to work with to complete this task?'

They may include closed questions; these are questions that typically require a short response and can include 'yes' and 'no' answers. An explicit question should be one that clearly recognises your need and what it is you want to know.



1.2 – Identify text type

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Recognise different types of texts
- Identify different features of text to differentiate between text types.

Different types of texts

Text is written or printed words in any form, typically forming a connected piece of work. Examples of different types of text include reference books, instructions, recipes, reports, training manuals, news features, articles, essays, postcards, letters and adverts.

There are other distinctions between the types of texts, for example, formal and informal, workplace and non-workplace, fiction and non-fiction, etc.

There are many categories of text. Workplace texts are just one category, and it is made up of all of the texts typically used, either sent or received, within the workplace.

Some common workplace texts may include:

- Formal letters
- Emails
- Memos
- Training materials
- Forms
- Staff notices
- Company website information
- Invoices
- Reports.



Identifying the text type

There are many different types of texts, and first, it is necessary to identify what type of text you are reading. Think about the above list of workplace texts. Each example is completely different and is characterised by its distinctive features. You must identify the features of the text in order to tell what type of text it is.

Texts are also adapted depending on who the audience is (i.e., the language used which is appropriate for that particular audience) and what the purpose of the text is (i.e., how the language is used to achieve that purpose). These are all identifiable features within the text.

For example, within the workplace, a formal letter of advice might be written to a client. The client is, therefore, the audience. The language used would be different from that used when writing to your manager and would certainly be different from that used when writing to a friend. It would be more formal as that is the appropriate language for this audience.

The purpose of the letter is to instruct or advise the client. The language used may be authoritative and persuasive. Certain points or words might be highlighted or repeated to add emphasis. The layout of the text itself would reflect the standard formatting used for formal letters, and templates are usually used within the workplace. Upon reading the letter, these features would become evident, and you would be able to identify the text type.

Features of text include:

- Headings – to let you know what the text relates to
- Paragraphs – to separate text into appropriate sections and related points
- Summaries – to inform you of the content or conclusions of a text
- Bullet lists – to list information
- Text style – to emphasise and draw attention, such as bold text or text in a box
- Long passages of text to inform
- Short sentences and messages that instruct you or communicate important or urgent information.

Identifying texts that apply to you

The previous example is just one way to highlight the process that would be used to determine and differentiate between types of text. Your work role will involve using workplace texts that will be commonplace to you, but it is still important to know how you should interpret these and the actions (if any) that you will need to take in response.

To identify the texts that you need to work with, you should know:

- The purpose of the text; for example, is it there to inform or instruct you?
- What you need to do as a result of reading the text; for example, do you need to send a reply or complete a task?
- How it needs to be used; for example, are you the intended audience, or does this information need to be used and shared with others in some way?



1.3 – Identify audience and purpose of text

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Determine audiences that are internal and external to the organisation
- Apply their skills and understanding of information to recognise the purpose of texts.

Audience and purpose

We have already established that every type of text is written with a specific audience in mind and for a certain purpose.

Common workplace audiences can be broken down into two categories, internal staff and external contacts. These categories may include the following persons.

Internal staff:

- You and your colleagues
- People working in other departments
- Other internal staff, such as contractors, volunteers or students on work placements
- Your supervisor
- Senior managers
- Your employer, etc.

External contacts:

- Customers and clients
- Suppliers
- Business associates
- Industry contacts
- Members of the public
- External visitors to your workplace.



We know who the audience is when we read a text. It should become evident from understanding the content of the text and from knowing your organisation's business operations. A workplace text will usually be addressed to someone or to a category of persons.

For example, you might write a formal letter to a client; it would be addressed to the client and would address them formally in the opening of the letter. Equally, a workplace memo might be addressed to all employees, and a workplace procedure will apply to a job role or function.

It may be the case that a workplace document is not addressed to anyone. The target audience of the text should still be clear upon reading it. For example, a training manual is not specifically addressed to anyone, but it is clear that its intended audience is a learner.

Once you have identified the audience, you need to identify the purpose of the text. Think about why you might need to write text within the workplace.

Common workplace purposes may include:

- To inform
- To instruct
- To reply to instructions
- To advise
- To persuade
- To train or educate
- To monitor progress, etc.

You can establish the purpose of a text by analysing the text and looking for features that show us what its purpose is. So, let's return to our example of a formal letter to a client. Its purpose could be to give them professional advice, it might be to simply inform them of something, or it could even be to persuade them to do something. For example, it might be a letter suggesting that they take a certain course of action, or it may try to sell them a product or service.

Consider the following examples:

Type of text	Audience	Purpose
Formal Letter	Client	Advise, inform, persuade, give or request instructions, etc.
Memo	Colleague	Inform, instruct, etc.
Training manual	Employees	Educate and develop skills
Invoice	Customer	To request or evidence payment
Report	Senior management, employees, external persons or bodies	Inform, analyse, conclude, etc.
Forms	Managers, employees, suppliers	Collect, collate and confirm information

1.4 – Identify distinguishing text features

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify common features of different workplace texts
- Recognise types of wording, grammar and punctuation that can be found in different workplace texts.

Identify text features

Further to section 1.2 of this unit, it has already been established that every type of text contains distinctive features. These features enable us to identify the type of text.

Text features also give us an understanding of the different text elements and how information is brought together to give meaning. For example, a text heading allows you to identify the text, an index tells you where certain words can be found in the text, and captions will explain graphics and images used in the text. Not all features will be required; these will be chosen according to the purpose.

The following are common features of workplace texts:

- Title
- Font size, style and colour
- Date
- Addressee's and addressor's details
- Headings
- Index
- Table of Contents
- Layout design
- Work place's information/details
- Credits/footnotes
- Charts, clip art, photographs, etc.
- Questions and answers (FAQs)
- Captions/labels.



There are also features within the actual text itself – the writing. The words used, as well as grammar and punctuation, all make a difference in how the text reads and how it is interpreted.

Grammar and punctuation

Wording will need to be clear and appropriate for the audience. Formal wording will include business-specific terminology and will be authoritative in tone; informal wording will be more relaxed and include everyday words and references.

Good use of grammar will not only provide you with the right meaning in texts, but it can also help to add emphasis, importance and feeling. Where the writer has placed a comma for a pause or added a description to provide additional context will alter how you absorb and interpret information. Using plain English and simple sentence constructs will avoid misunderstanding or confusion. Attention to punctuation and how information is broken down will be as important as the words themselves.

Common features may include:

- Using capital or bold letters to emphasise certain words
- Punctuation, e.g., using short sentences to make key points easier to understand
- Punctuation marks, e.g., Using exclamation marks to emphasise a key point when persuading someone or, using question marks when requesting instructions or asking for clarification
- Using repetition to emphasise points, e.g., to be more persuasive
- Using adjectives to describe (e.g., to enable the reader to picture what you are writing about).



Text register

The register of a text is how formal the language is. This level of formality will be written with the audience and the purpose of the communication in mind. It will be written in such a way that it connects with, rather than excludes, the audience. Therefore, text register is also about the type of language you choose in order to engage with a particular target audience.

For example, a key facts document about your organisation's business will include some business terminology to indicate the professional nature of the information, but it will avoid using terms that the general public/customer will not know. However, an organisational text with the same information that is used to report business to other staff may be devoid of explanations or illustrations.

Alternatively, a staff newsletter that communicates about staff achievements will be more informal and include words and phrases that inspire and encourage collegiality. It may use standard organisational messages and mission statements.

2. Interpret information in text

- 2.1.** Use structure and features of information to navigate text and locate relevant information
- 2.2.** Identify and interpret workplace terminology in texts
- 2.3.** Use reading strategies to interpret relevant information and construct meaning
- 2.4.** Use critical reading skills to analyse information



2.1 – Use structure and features of information to navigate text and locate relevant information

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify the structure of and where information can be found in texts
- Locate information you need using text features.

Navigating information

Texts may be short or long but are all designed to give and communicate information. When using these in the workplace, you will need to be able to navigate through different texts to locate the information that is relevant and needed by you.

Navigating texts is best done by interpreting the structure of the text, such as a report that has a summary, report findings and subsequent conclusions, or an invoice that will list the items purchased and the costs incurred. The structure is how a text is put together and presented to you.

When you know what type of text you are looking at, you can then begin to look for the features that will tell you what you need to know. In the report example, you may want to skip to the conclusions or check facts in the report findings. The features of the text help us to navigate our way around the information contained within it.

Consider the following features:

- Index
- Table of contents
- Headings
- Subject matter
- Tables and charts
- Introduction or conclusion.



All of the above tell where you need to look to find certain information.

Think about what information you are trying to find. For example, you may be looking for certain information within a health and safety training guide. Using features such as the table of contents and index will help you to identify the relevant passages and the corresponding page numbers. You can search for the keywords, e.g., accidents, safety, regulations, etc.

Once you have found the relevant section, you can then use the headings to navigate your way through the section to see what each part is about. If there are any tables and charts, you should read them, as they can often be an efficient method to identify and process information quickly.

If the text has none of the above features, you should skim read the text quickly to discover where the relevant information is contained and also to get an understanding of the whole text. You should pay particular attention to the introductory and concluding paragraphs as these may summarise key points.

Once you have done this, you can then go back to the sections that you have identified as being relevant. You can also look for highlighted words to identify the significant parts of a text; often, a bold text line or larger text can be styled that way to convey an important message.

Remember, if the text is an electronic document, you can use the search tools on your computer to search for relevant keywords. The results will show you where the information can be found.

To recap, techniques to navigate workplace information include:

- Identifying the structure of the text and where information can be found within it
- Using a table of contents or index to locate information
- Reading text headings to determine what may be included in the text
- Performing word searches for keywords
- Skimming and scan-reading the text
- Reading information in boxes, tables and charts
- Looking for larger or bold words in the text.



2.2 – Identify and interpret workplace terminology in texts

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Determine words that are used in workplace terminology
- Interpret the meaning of workplace terminology.

Workplace terminology

Workplace terminology is a body of terms used within a particular profession or area of work, for example, legal terminology. If you encountered legal terminology in a text, it might include words such as claimant, the defendant, legislation, etc.

If you are not well-versed with workplace terminology, it can make understanding information more difficult, as you would need to look-up what these words mean. They can relate to technical aspects, professional functions and the development of a specific type of business language.

Workplace terminology may include phrases, expressions and choice of words that are commonly used within that profession or area of work. This might also be described as jargon.

Jargon is the special words or expressions used by a particular profession, which may be difficult for others to understand. Jargon can be a handy way of explaining things quickly, but if used with the wrong audience, it can sometimes create a barrier to effective communication. For example, everyone in your company might know what Form 1X is, but if you refer to it like that with a supplier or customer, it would probably mean nothing to them, and straight away, by using jargon, you have created a communication barrier between you and the other person.

A general rule is not to use jargon with external people and to only use it with internal people if you are sure that they understand it.



Acronyms and abbreviations

It may also include acronyms; i.e., letters taken from a series of words to form an abbreviated term. This shortens a commonly used set of words to make communicating information quicker, such as PPE (this stands for personal protective equipment). Once again, acronyms should only be used when the audience will know and understand what these mean. However, if a set of words will be used frequently in a text, it is common practice to write this in full the first time it appears (with the acronym in brackets) and then using the acronym thereafter.

Note that abbreviations may also be commonplace in workplace texts. Although these may be easier to understand as they are the shortened form of one word (e.g., 'amt' stands for amount), they may also require an explanation. One example where these may be seen will be in graphs and tables, when space for text is at a premium.

General workplace jargon

As a business grows, it may identify and use common industry jargon or develop its own. These will be terms that are used evenly across the organisation and may be less industry-specific. As such, you should come to know and recognise the terms and jargon that are used.

Some common general workplace jargon can be found below:

- Competencies – the skills that a person has
- Guesstimate – making an estimate with some guesswork
- Leverage – to gain an advantage by taking a specific action
- Mission statement – the identified aims and values of an organisation.

Interpreting workplace terminology or jargon

Once you have identified workplace terminology or jargon within texts, you will need to interpret its meaning if you don't already understand the term.

Ways in which you can interpret workplace jargon texts may include:

- Using internet search engines to find out the meaning of the term
- Using a dictionary; a specialist dictionary, specific to the area of work would be most helpful
- Asking your supervisor/manager to explain the meaning
- Replying to or contacting the writer of the text for clarification
- Consulting workplace training materials to develop your knowledge of the terminology specific to your profession or area of work
- Asking a colleague to explain the meaning, if they know.



2.3 – Use reading strategies to interpret relevant information and construct meaning

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify reading strategies that best suit the type of text being read
- Self-monitor their reading to ensure text is interpreted accurately.

Locating and interpreting relevant information

When you are reading the text, you need to consider what strategies will help you to locate and interpret relevant information quickly and efficiently.

You should first refer to the notes from the previous section on the use of features such as the table of contents, index, headings, introductory and concluding paragraphs, tables and charts, etc. which will help you to initially locate where the relevant information can be found.

Once you have found the relevant information, you should use the following reading strategies where appropriate:

- Scan the text for the most relevant sections, e.g., are there any bullet points of key information, or any particularly important headings?
- Skim the text by glancing over the whole text quickly to ascertain the overall content and which information may be most relevant
- As you read, you can highlight key words and phrases, underline or annotate the text, or write your own notes in the margin (you may need to make your own hard copy to do this). This will provide you with a quick reference to the most important information and allow you to locate key material easily
- Re-read the text to confirm your understanding and meaning of this. This approach will help if you are reading complex information; you may want to take a break in between reading to make sure you have a fresh pair of eyes
- As you read, you should also make a note of any information you don't understand or wish to explore in more detail
- Refer to your notes as you go along and keep a dictionary beside you; this will allow you to interpret text much faster without stopping reading for long. Preferably, use a specialist subject dictionary, relevant to your area of work
- Alternatively, you can make notes of the relevant points and prioritise what is important, so you discard any unnecessary information



- Summarise and question the information that you read; this can help you to understand this in more detail.

Self-monitor your reading

When reading information, it will be up to you to manage how you do this. You will need to gain an accurate understanding of information within reasonable work timeframes or designated task deadlines.

Understanding information will include:

- The factual accuracy of information (you may need to verify anything that is not referenced or which contradicts other texts)
- The context of information (such as influences and any circumstances that apply)
- The opinions and thoughts presented by writers (this may be objective or contain bias).

You may need to use techniques such as the reading strategies just mentioned; for example, re-reading information after a short break can help you to determine any nuances in meaning that may have been missed the first time.

You can also create a mental or written checklist of questions that you can use to determine the sense and accuracy of information that may be more difficult to determine.

For example:

- Is this information clear in its meaning?
- Has the writer provided all of the relevant details?
- Do I need to check any of this information with other persons or authoritative information sources?

Other techniques to self-monitor reading for sense and accuracy include:

- Using your knowledge and workplace resources to check information that is unclear
- Breaking down information into sizeable chunks or parts, so this is easier to understand
- Making a note of the information as you understand it to be (i.e., note down the facts, points or instructions in your own words on a separate piece of paper)
- Summarising the key points and confirming these with the relevant person.



2.4 – Use critical reading skills to analyse information

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Determine when to use critical reading skills
- Apply a process to critically read texts
- Ask questions that will help them to analyse information in texts.

Interpreting information

In some situations, you will only need to identify the key points in information, for example, the time and location for a workplace meeting, or a quantity of a resource item. At other times, you may need to use your thinking skills to truly understand what is being communicated to you; for those times, you will need to use critical reading skills.

When we read something critically, we are reading it to evaluate and understand the information contained within the text, rather than simply reading it without learning or developing in any way. For example, you might be reading the text to ascertain specific instructions, to make a judgement or to gain knowledge. For all of these things, you will need to analyse and understand the information provided within the text, not simply read it without processing the information.

Critical reading

In the workplace, it is important that you have the critical reading skills to analyse and understand this information. For example, you may have limited time or a vast quantity to read. How can you ensure that you are using the right skills when reading workplace texts?

First, you need to read the text practically. Before you start, ask yourself why you are reading this text and/or what information you need to obtain and understand. Make a note of the key points you want to achieve if this helps.

Refer to section 2.1 and navigation skills to locate relevant information, and use those skills to first obtain an overview of the text. Consider the index, headings, introduction, etc., to establish which parts of the text are relevant to achieving your aims.

Next, evaluate the text by asking the critical questions that have been considered so far:

- Who wrote the text?
- Who is the audience?
- What is its purpose?
- Is there any workplace terminology or jargon used that you don't understand and need to interpret?
- Where and how can I find the relevant information quickly and efficiently?



Making notes, annotations and highlighting key words while reading, all help you to evaluate and understand the text and to answer the questions above. You should check with your supervisor that you have understood a workplace text correctly. You should also review your notes throughout the reading process and update them if necessary.

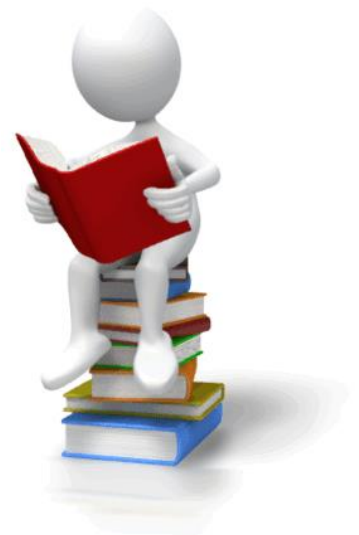
How can we critically interpret a text? Think about the above questions again but this time, ask:

- Did the correct person write the text?
- Is it addressed to the correct audience?
- Does it meet its intended purpose?
- Does it adequately explain workplace terminology?
- Does it contain all of the relevant/required information?

In answering the above questions, you are using your critical reading skills to interpret a text. You are analysing the text and making judgements about it.

You may also wish to consider the following, which may also help you to interpret the text:

- Compare this text to other texts of a similar subject matter.
Don't assume that the information is correct
- Is the information contained within the text from a reputable source?
- When was it written? Is it still relevant?
- How is it presented – are the correct features used to clearly communicate the purpose of the text?
- Has any information been omitted?
- Do you need to ask the writer to clarify any points you don't understand?



3. Check understanding and identify response to text

- 3.1. Check that information in text has been correctly understood
- 3.2. Use information to identify appropriate response
- 3.3. Reflect on text effectiveness in meeting intended text purpose



3.1 – Check that information in text has been correctly understood

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Use methods to confirm the correct understanding of texts
- Use active listening and questioning skills to confirm their understanding of texts.

Confirm your understanding of the text

You have now been through the skills and knowledge required to critically analyse and interpret a text. However, you should not assume that your understanding of the text is correct. It is easy to misunderstand information.

This is why it is important to check that you have correctly understood the information contained in workplace documents. In a workplace setting, the most obvious person to check with would be your supervisor, trainer or a senior manager. Think about who would be the relevant person to ask. Who would know whether the information was correct? It may be a case of having to approach the author of the text for clarification.

Remember, there are two elements that you need to check:

- Is the information in the text correct?
- If so, have you understood it in the correct way?

You can check that you have correctly understood the information you have read using the following methods, as appropriate:

- You can check that the information is correct by cross-referencing this with another text or source of information, e.g., using a dictionary, internet searches, comparing to other texts within the subject area, etc.
- You can check that you have understood the information in the correct way by asking the author of the text
- You can ask your workplace supervisor or trainer to confirm that your understanding is correct and/or to provide feedback on your critical reading skills.



Active listening and questioning

As well as using written forms of communication to query any parts or to confirm the correct meaning of text. It may also be necessary to confirm understanding in a face-to-face conversation. When writing to check this, you will have time to form your words and consider how best to phrase your needs; written communications will be sent, digested and responded to in-turn. However, when speaking directly to another person, the communication will be instant and fluid; you will need to listen and respond to information in the moment.

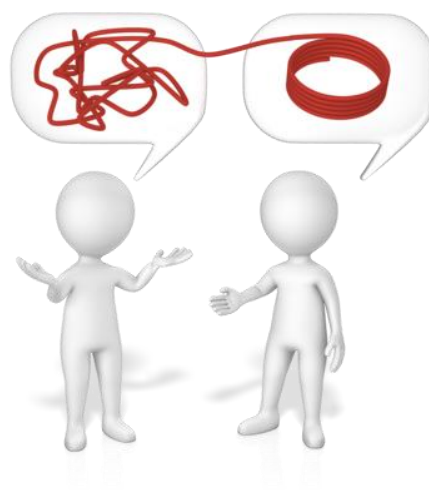
Active listening and questioning skills are very important to hone in spoken communications. Active listening is a form of communicating; it requires the listener to feedback what they hear to the speaker to confirm their understanding. (That is, rather than simply taking a passive approach and just listening to what is being said to them.) If you just listen, you are less likely to engage with the speaker and may miss important points.

The listener may provide feedback such as 'hmm', 'yes', 'I see', etc. to suggest they understand what the speaker is saying. After the speaker has finished, they may put into their own words what the speaker has said, this avoids confusion and ensures any misunderstandings can be rectified quickly.

You can tell if someone has really understood if they demonstrate active listening techniques and you should encourage people you are conversing with to do so.

You will need to be able to:

- Effectively comprehend information
- Maintain concentration and show enthusiasm
- Ignore distractions and noises in the surrounding environment
- Re-word what the other person has said
- Maintain eye contact
- Resist the temptation to interrupt
- Practice turn-taking during discussions.



Questions may need to be asked and should be constructed specifically for the need. It will be important to think about what you need to find out or confirm, so you can pose a suitable style of question.

Questioning techniques could include:

- Open questions allow other people to give a full description or expand on certain points. The best open-ended questions start with 'when', 'what', 'how', 'who' or 'where'
- Closed questions (that predict a yes or no answer) are okay for gathering information, but bear in mind that they give no opportunity for you to discuss things
- Either/or questions give a person two choices but restrict the respondent to those choices – you should only use these if you are certain that the answer is one or the other
- Leading questions are suggestive and can sometimes be used to persuade.

3.2 – Use information to identify appropriate response

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Determine how information in texts should be responded to
- Follow organisational guidelines to respond appropriately.

Responding appropriately

After checking that you have understood the information in a text correctly, the only thing left to do is to respond to it appropriately.

You can use your critical analysis and the information you have found to ensure that your response is appropriate. First, think about what type of text it was and, therefore, the appropriate type of response. For example, you might respond to a formal letter with another formal letter. However, depending on the content, you might simply respond with a telephone call, e.g., to confirm something. However, it is unlikely that you would respond to a short email with a formal letter. But, again, it depends on the context, which is why you must also consider the purpose of the text. Was it asking you for information? Or, just to confirm something? Do you need to respond, or was it simply informing you of something?

For some texts, you do not necessarily need to respond to the author of the text – for example, a training manual. However, an appropriate or necessary response might be completing a self-assessment form or writing a development plan for your own training progress. These documents would need to be sent to your trainer or supervisor.

You, therefore, need to consider the type of text and its purpose in order to ensure that you respond to the correct person in the right way.

When you do respond, an appropriate response will confirm that you have understood all of the information in the text.

You may want to consider the following:

- Have you responded to all of the points raised/questions asked?
- Have you responded to the correct person?
- Do you need to carry out an action in response to information?
- Do you need to forward your response to anyone else?
- Is there any information that you didn't understand that you need to raise in your response?
- Do you need to ask them to respond to your response?



It will depend on your job role and organisation, as to the appropriate response you should take. Clear workplace guidelines and instructions to direct responses should be given.

Suitable responses to routine workplace information may include:

- Answering a query
- Performing a work task
- Forwarding information to other persons
- Updating information systems and/or records
- Filing and storing information.

3.3 – Reflect on text effectiveness in meeting intended text purpose

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify how to carry out reflective practice
- Assess practice for their individual improvement.

Reflecting on text reading and responding

When a text has been read and responded to, it can be appropriate to assess how effective the process was, and if any aspect could be changed or improved for future working. This may be a part of your own individual work practice or a requirement of organisational review practices to carry out continuous improvement.

You may want to review separate aspects, such as how information was communicated, the timeframes for communicating, and the way that information was presented to you. Focusing on one thing at a time can help you to improve your own processes and efficiencies. It may also identify undiscovered issues that you or others have been compensating for.

Equally, you may want to reflect on the task as a whole to determine how effective this is in relation to your job role or work goals. For example, this could include time management, how you perform work tasks, or how you use workplace technologies.

Reflective practice

Reflecting allows you to assess what has happened; it is about looking back at something after it has taken place and when you are less attached to it. This practice is about assessing your experience and how you carried out the required work. The point of this is to reflect on what you (and others) did and whether this was successful. It can include assessing personal feelings, knowledge and beliefs, in order to break down and understand what has taken place and how it can be improved.

To carry out reflective practice, you must:

- Be honest about yourself and what you and others do
- Be objective and not take assessment personally
- Be ready to look for patterns and evaluate your practice for improvement
- Be willing to change to make improvements.

For example:

You receive an email request which you collate along with other emails in your to-do list for responding to. However, you fail to note that the email requires an urgent response and you respond to this, in-turn (which is just within the required deadline).

Where normally, you may just be relieved to have met the deadline and then move on without further thought; reflective practice would lead you to realise that your work organisation skills need to be improved, so you do not miss such details in the future.



Kolb's experiential learning cycle

The education theorist, David Kolb, created an experiential learning style theory that can be applied to reflective practice.

The four stages are:

- Concrete experience (what takes place)
- Reflective observation (assessment of that experience)
- Abstract conceptualisation (forming conclusions of that experience)
- Active experimentation (making changes to improve, as a result of the experience).

This process directs the approach of reflection, so that change is encouraged as part of personal growth and learning.

Source 'Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Cycle' by Sam McLeod at Simply Psychology:
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>.



Summative Assessments

At the end of your Learner Workbook, you will find the Summative Assessments.

This includes:

- Skills Activity
- Knowledge Activity
- Performance Activity.

This holistically assesses your understanding and application of the skills, knowledge and performance requirements for this unit. Once this is completed, you will have finished this unit and be ready to move onto the next one – well done!

References

These suggested references are for further reading and do not necessarily represent the contents of this unit.

Websites

'Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Cycle' by Sam McLeod at Simply Psychology:
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>

All references accessed on and correct as of 07.04.2020, unless otherwise stated.