



SOFT SKILLS+

Social Skills Lesson Plans

**Soft Skills For People With
Intellectual Disabilities**

Content

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 1	3
Social Skills – Lesson Plan 2	10
Social Skills – Lesson Plan 3	17
Social Skills – Lesson Plan 4	24
Social Skills – Lesson Plan 5	31
Social Skills – Lesson Plan 6	38
Additional Resources	45

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 1



Starting and Keeping Conversations: Developing Social Skills for Everyday Interactions

The objective of the activity is to provide learners with appropriate conversation skills for different scenarios, which in turn helps increase their confidence when speaking with others.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will gain the basics of starting conversations.
- Learners will practise asking and answering questions.
- Learners will begin to feel more comfortable when communicating with others.

Materials:

- Handout 1: Social Skills Cue Cards.
- Handout 2: Conversation Extender.
- Handout 3: Reflection Worksheet Lesson Plan 1.

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Initiating Dialogue (10 minutes)

- Assign 2-3 learners into small groups to encourage interaction.
- Use the Social Skills Cue Cards (Handout 1), which offer basic conversation starters such as “Hello, how are you?”, “What do you like to do for fun?”, and “Can I help you?” for this activity.
- Each person should choose a conversation starter card from the deck, which they will use to engage another learner in conversation.
- Follow up with some open-ended questions. Participants should reflect on how easily they were able to start a conversation with others:
 - When someone approached you, how did it make you feel?

Activity 1: Keeping the Conversation Going (20 minutes)

- The activity involves learners maintaining extended conversations with their peers in pairs. Learners should remain in the same groups as in the previous activity. Give them the conversation extender cards from Handout 2.
- The conversation begins with a simple question that encourages both speakers to explore the topic further through follow-up questions.
- Encourage learners to use eye contact, friendly facial expressions, and active listening techniques, such as nodding and showing appreciation through verbal responses. Participants should change partners after 10 minutes.
- Group Discussion Questions:
 - What were the most effective techniques to maintain conversation flow?
 - What made the activity difficult?

Activity 2: Reflection & Worksheet (10 minutes)

- Using the reflection worksheet (handout 3), learners should write down the following:
 - The aspects which made it easy and difficult to initiate discussions.
 - The areas that need improvement for their next attempt.

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- Ask learners to share the single most important lesson they plan to apply in their everyday lives.
- Encourage learners to start conversations with unfamiliar people during the coming week.

Tips for Educators

1

Build an open and pleasant space for learners.

2

Even if they feel self-conscious, learners should try to attempt the conversation.

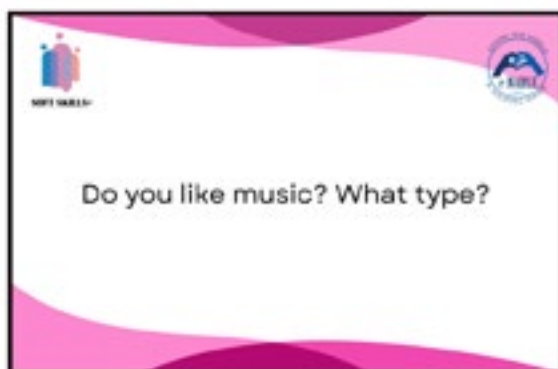
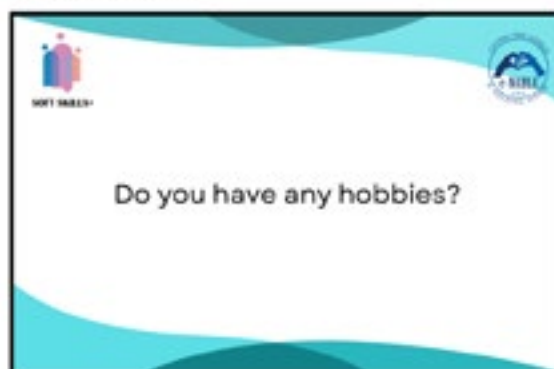
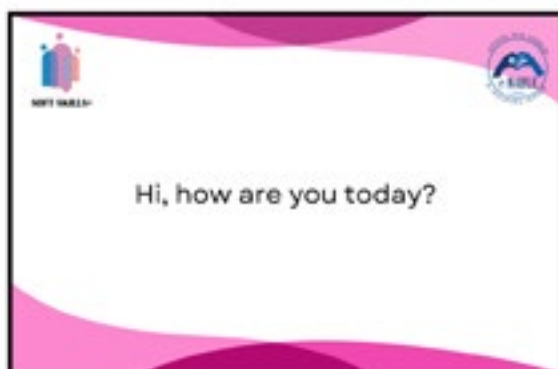
3

Offer praise to help build learners' confidence.

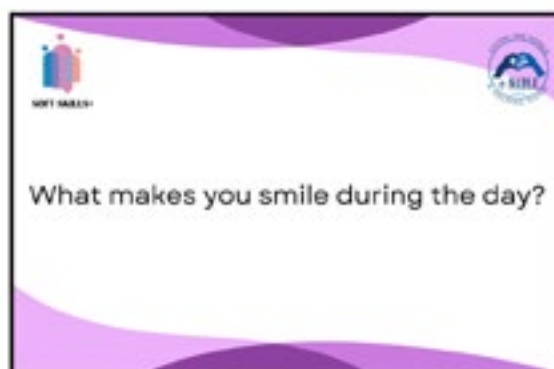
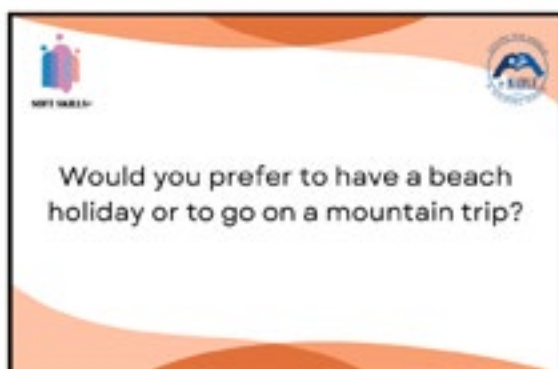
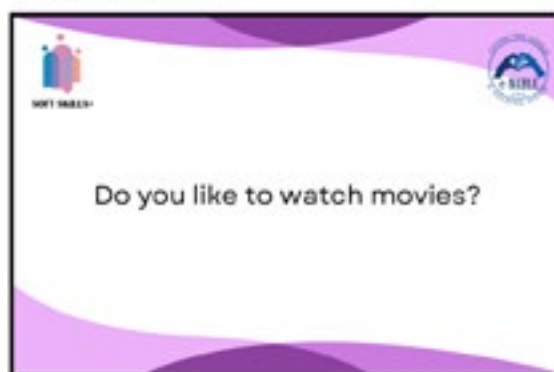
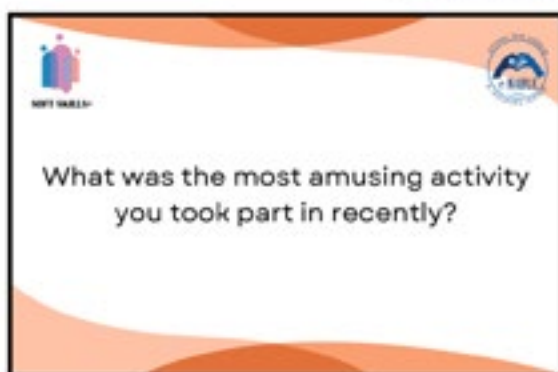


Handout 1 – Social Skills Cue Cards

Conversation Starter (Activity 1)

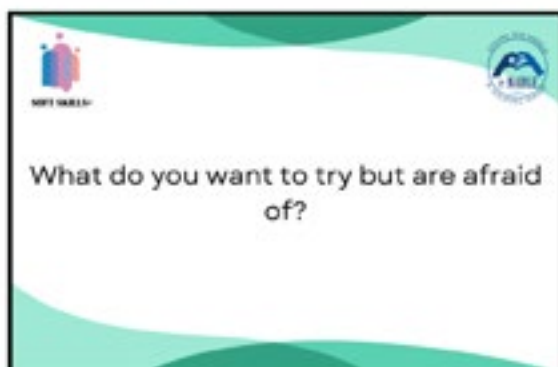
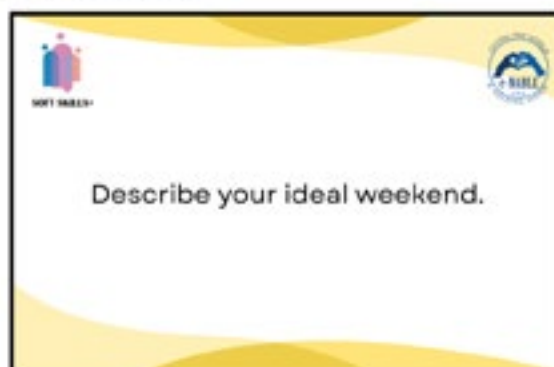


Conversation Starter (Activity 1)

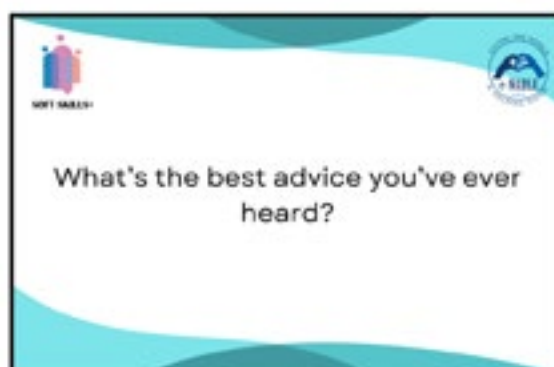
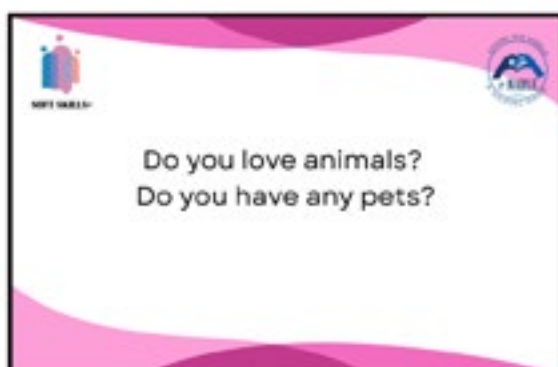
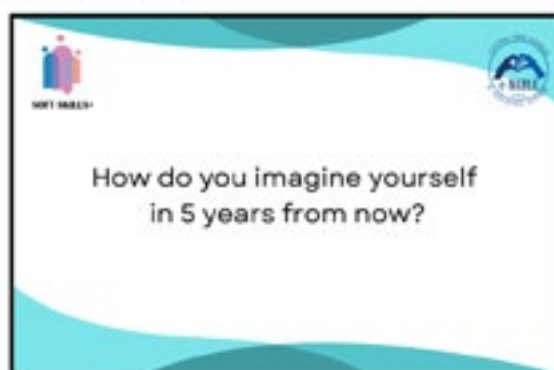
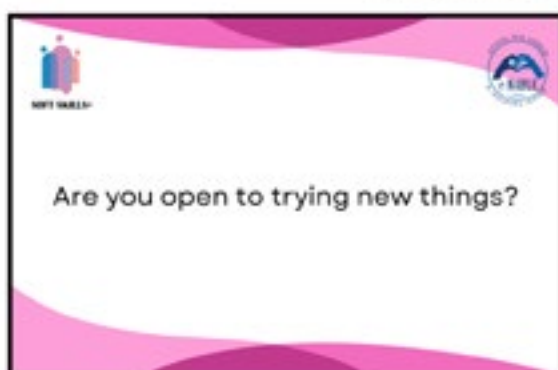






Handout 1 – Social Skills Cue Cards

Conversation Extender (Activity 2)



Conversation Extender (Activity 2)



Name: _____	Date: _____
<h2 style="margin: 0;">REFLECTION WORKSHEET</h2> <div style="text-align: right;"></div>	
<p>Activity 3 - Reflecting on a Conversation</p> <p>1 Before we started... Rate your feeling of comfort before initiating a conversation from 1 (very uncomfortable) to 5 (very comfortable).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/>1 <input type="checkbox"/>2 <input type="checkbox"/>3 <input type="checkbox"/>4 <input type="checkbox"/>5</p> <p>2 Before beginning the conversation, reflect on what made you feel nervous. What part of it worried you the most?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>3 During the conversation... What were your emotions when others approached you first?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>4 During the interaction, did you face any obstacles, like things that made the conversation difficult, such as misunderstanding the other person or not knowing what to say next?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>5 Looking Ahead...</p> <p>During today's conversation, I succeeded at:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The specific area I wish to enhance my performance in is</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The conversation starter that I plan to apply again is</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The conversational target I choose for this week is _____.</p>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"><div></div><div></div></div>	

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 2



Understanding Social Cues & Body Language: Communicating Beyond Words

The objective of the activity is to guide learners through social interactions using non-verbal communication behaviour. The activities enable learners to identify and effectively utilise their body language, facial expressions, and gestures to improve social relationships.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be able to recognise social cues such as eye contact, smiles, and hand gestures.
- Learners will understand how their body movements affect the way they communicate.
- Learners will be able to use non-verbal communication skills effectively when interacting with others.

Materials:

- Handout 4: Pictures of different Facial Expressions.
- Handout 5: Role Playing Scenario Cards.
- Handout 6: Reflection Worksheet Lesson Plan 2.

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Understanding Body Language (10 minutes)

- Our initial judgement of others often begins by observing their facial expressions and body language, even before any conversation takes place.
- Give participants photos showing different facial expressions (see Handout 4). They should examine a range of expressions that reflect emotional states (e.g., happy, sad, angry, surprised) and identify the feelings associated with each.
- **Learners will discuss:**
 - How these expressions influence the way we interpret what someone is saying.
- Ask learners:
 - Have you ever misunderstood someone because of their natural body posture?

Activity 1: Acting Out Social Cues (20 minutes)

- Distribute the Role-Playing Scenario Cards (handout 5) among small learning groups of 3-4 learners.
- Learners should practise the following:
 - Introducing someone using both a handshake and a friendly smile.
 - Ensuring everyone maintains appropriate personal space while queueing.
 - Demonstrating effective active listening during group conversations.
- Individuals from each group will act out their scenario while the other groups observe and analyse the social cues being displayed.
- **Group discussion questions:**
 - While observing the scenario, what social cues did you notice?

- Did the way participants use their body language influence how they interacted?
- When someone keeps their distance or crosses their arms tightly, does it make the outcome of the interaction unclear?

Activity 2: Reflection & Worksheet (10 minutes)

- The Reflection Worksheet (handout 6) contains a set of questions that learners need to respond to, including:
 - Which social cue caught my attention the most during the activity?
 - Which body language techniques will help make my communication more effective?

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- Learners will apply their knowledge to real-life situations during the final discussion session.
- Think-Pair-Share activity:
 - Recall a conversation you had in the past few days. What non-verbal cues did you notice during that exchange?
 - Did the person's facial expressions and body language align with what they were saying, and how did that affect the conversation?
 - Were you able to recognise the other person's emotions, even when their words didn't clearly express them?
- Practical challenge: Learners need to set goals for their upcoming weekly activities.
 - When interacting with new people, I will aim to maintain direct eye contact.
 - During conversations, I will take more time to observe the body language of others.
 - In social encounters, I will work on improving my habit of smiling when greeting others.
- Learners should share their observations about how well they followed this plan in the next session!

Tips for Educators

1

Make sure learners feel comfortable when taking part in role-play activities.

2

Use real-life examples to help learners understand the topic more effectively.

3

Encourage learners to develop the habit of noticing social cues during breaks from regular lessons.



Handout 4 – Pictures of different Facial Expressions:

Facial Expression (Activity 1)



Co-funded by the European Union Erasmus +



Facial Expression (Activity 1)



Co-funded by the European Union Erasmus +





Handout 5 – Role Playing Scenario Cards:

Role-Play Scenario Cards (Activity 2)





Card 1:
Meeting Someone New

- ✓ Approach a new person.
- ✓ Say 'hello' with a smile and a pretend handshake.
- ✓ Respond directly and maintain eye contact during your greeting.



Card 2:
Waiting in Line

- ✓ Pretend you're in a queue.
- ✓ Respect personal space.
- ✓ Try to look ahead and stay calm.






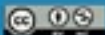
Card 3:
Group Conversation

- ✓ Join a small group discussion.
- ✓ Demonstrate your listening skills by maintaining eye contact and giving positive reactions with both your face and head.
- ✓ Use open body language.



Card 4:
Showing Discomfort

- ✓ Think of a stranger being too close to you.
- ✓ Hold your arms crossed while looking away from that person.
- ✓ Other learners observe your emotions and try to recognise how you feel.

Name:	Date:
<h2 style="margin: 0;">REFLECTION WORKSHEET</h2> <div style="text-align: right;"></div>	
<p>Activity 3 - Communicating Without Words</p> <p>1 Observing Others... Which of the observations below caught your attention most?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Eye Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Smile <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Gesture <input type="checkbox"/> Body Posture</p> <p>2 Think about one group's role-play. Did their body language give a clear first impression before they started talking?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>3 Reflecting on My Communication... My actual body movements during the role-play were:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Nervous <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure</p> <p>4 Based on your physical behaviours, people likely formed judgments about you. What do you think?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>5 Moving Forward... I need to develop these specific body language abilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Smiling more often<input type="checkbox"/> Making eye contact<input type="checkbox"/> Using open gestures<input type="checkbox"/> Listening with my body	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"><div></div><div></div></div>	

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 3



Adjusting to Different Social Situations – Communicating with Confidence in Any Case

The objective of the activity is to help learners adapt their communication style depending on the setting, whether they are at work, in school, at a family gathering, or attending a social event.

Learning Outcomes:

- Recognise when to use formal versus informal communication.
- Adjust their behaviour and language based on different social contexts.
- Show respect and politeness in various interactions.

Materials:

- Handout 7: Situation Prompt Cards.
- Handout 8: Role-Play Scenario Cards.
- Handout 9: Reflection Worksheet Lesson Plan 3.
- Video Clips (showing formal and informal conversations).

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Recognising Different Social Settings (10 minutes)

- Learners will explore a range of scenarios demonstrating different communication methods using the situation prompt cards (Handout 7).
- Each learner should select a card individually. Each card presenting a different situation, such as a workplace, school, family, or social setting. For example:
 - Learners must introduce themselves to a superior in a professional workplace setting.
 - A conversation takes place between two friends chatting in a coffee shop.
 - Another activity involves starting a conversation during a social gathering.
- Learners will then present their chosen scenario and explain their communication approach for that specific situation.
- **Group discussion:**
 - Several factors influence how formal a setting feels compared to others.
 - Body language, tone, and word choice all vary depending on the situation.
 - Have you ever used an inappropriate communication style for a particular setting? What happened?

Activity 1: Observing Formal vs. Informal Communication (20 minutes)

- This activity encourages learners to examine real-life examples from their surroundings.
- Watch short video clips:
 - Learners will watch two clips, one showing a professional conversation, the other a casual, day-to-day discussion.

- **Example scenarios include:**

- A job interview vs. two colleagues chatting during lunch; a learner speaking to a teacher vs. a learner speaking to a classmate.

- **Group discussion:**

- Learners should identify key differences between formal and informal ways of speaking. A professional tone often relies on the choice of vocabulary and expressions. Different situations influence how people express tone, facial expressions, and body language.

- **Interactive challenge:**

- Learners must assess the level of formality in short audio conversations.

Activity 2: Role-Playing & Worksheet “guide” (10 minutes)

- Learners will now demonstrate their understanding through role-playing activities.
- Paired role-play exercise:
 - Provide learners with the role-play scenario cards (see handout 8).
 - Each learner pairs up with a classmate to work through scenarios and discuss how to begin a conversation, for example, “Asking your boss for time off” versus “Asking a friend to hang out.”
 - Learners will perform the formal version of the scenario, followed by the informal version of the same conversation. Guide them in adapting their language, tone, and body language to suit each context.
- **Worksheet completion:** Learners should complete the reflection worksheet (handout 9). The worksheet includes questions that learners must answer in order to create their own personal communication guide. For example:
 - I made several adjustments to my communication style between the first and second role-plays.
 - I felt more natural in one scenario compared to the other.
 - I want to reflect on the challenges I experienced when switching between professional and casual ways of speaking.

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- The educator presents a series of quick social scenarios, and learners must adapt their communication style to suit each setting.
- The educator provides immediate verbal feedback and suggestions throughout this activity.
 - If you're contacting a close friend about weekend plans, what kind of language would be most suitable?
 - If you've failed an assignment and need to apologise to your teacher, how should you phrase your message?
 - When ordering food at a restaurant, how should you speak to the waiting staff?
- This activity requires learners to respond on the spot, selecting appropriate phrases and tones for each situation.

- **Group reflection:**

Learners reflect on the scenarios that were most challenging to adapt to:

- “Did any scenario feel uncomfortable or awkward? Why?”
- “What signs help you recognise the right moment to shift between informal and formal styles of communication?”



Tips for Educators

1

Encourage learners to study how people adjust their communication style when interacting in real-life situations.

2

Formal communication does not require stiff or unnatural behaviour; it should instead reflect respect and appropriate professional conduct.

3

The lesson becomes more engaging when interactive video content is combined with real-life role-play scenarios and fast-paced activities.

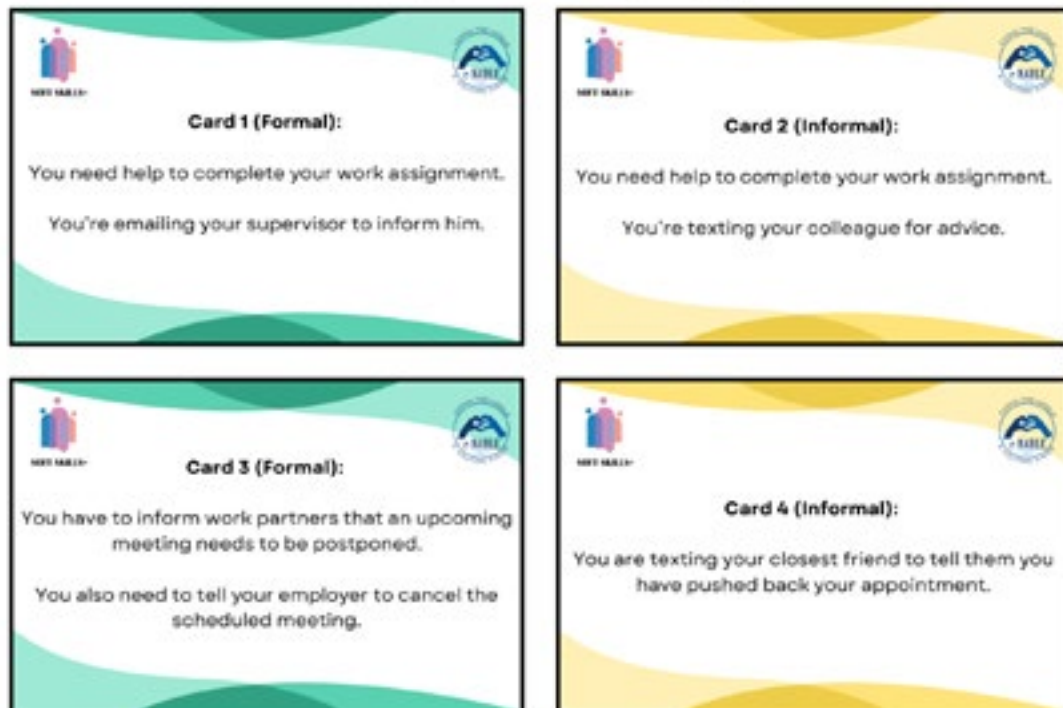
Handout 7 - Situation Prompt Cards:

Situation Prompt Cards (Activity 1)



Handout 8 - Role-Play Scenario Cards:

Role-Play Scenario Cards (Activity 3)



Name: _____

Date: _____

REFLECTION WORKSHEET



Activity 3 - Communicating in Different Ways

- 1 How did your body language change during formal and informal communication?

- 2 Which communication type do you prefer best? ☐ Formal ☐ Informal
- 3 Identify which aspects of your actions were most difficult between the two situations.

- 4 Communication Style Guide... For formal interactions (e.g., in school and work), please list three commonly used phrases and after that list three informal ones.

- 5 Name two things you will consider when choosing your future tone and speaking style
☐ Who I'm talking to.
☐ The place where the conversation takes place.
☐ How close I feel to that person.
☐ My goal in the conversation.
☐ Other: _____

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 4



Handling Conflicts in a Positive Way

– Turning Disagreements into Solutions

The objective of the activity is to teach learners about handling conflicts through different approaches when managing disagreements respectfully.

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify different conflict resolution styles.
- Enhancement of both listening methods and communication abilities to handle conflicts effectively.
- Strategies should be used to find peaceful solutions that are fair for everyone.

Materials:

- Handout 10: Stages of Conflict Handout.
- Handout 11: Conflict Resolution Role-Playing Cards.
- Handout 12: Reflection Worksheet - "Win-Win Solutions" - Lesson Plan 4.

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Understanding Conflict Stages (10 minutes)

- Conflicts often develop gradually because we allow our emotions about a situation to build up over time. Learners will review Handout 10, which outlines the "Stages of Conflict", and take part in class discussions.
- Minor disagreements often become more intense both before and after the point of escalation. Ask learners if a disagreement that started on a small scale has ever grown into something more serious than they originally expected?
- Group discussion:

To explore further, ask learners to consider a common conflict example to relate to the stages of conflict:

- A typical workplace situation is used as a common conflict example, in which learners take on the roles of two friends in disagreement or colleagues involved in an argument.
- Each participant analyses the level of conflict and explores possible solutions to help reduce it before it escalates.

Activity 1: Role-playing Conflict Scenarios (20 minutes)

- Assign learners into groups and provide them with the conflict resolution role-playing cards (handout 11), which contain scenarios such as:
 - A disagreement with a coworker.
 - An everyday conflict with a friend.
 - A misunderstanding at a social event.
- The groups perform the conflict scenario twice:
 - The first time the scenario is acted out without using any conflict resolution techniques.
 - The second time, learners should apply problem-solving and active listening strategies.

- Group discussion:
 - Participants should identify the factors that led to differences between Version 1 and Version 2.
 - Group members should highlight which resolution methods were most effective.
 - How did calm communication and active listening help to resolve the situation?

Activity 2: Win-Win Solutions Worksheet (10 minutes)

- All participants use the “Win-Win Solutions” worksheet (handout 12) to record their evaluation. They should write down the following:
 - The issue at the centre of the conflict.
 - What each side supports.
 - How the agreement satisfies the needs of all participants.

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to reflect on the following:
 - After today’s lesson, how might you approach a past disagreement differently using alternative strategies?
 - Which conflict resolution technique would you choose to use when future disputes arise?

Tips for Educators

1

Conflict discussions should take place when learners are able to keep their emotional responses balanced.

2

The lesson demonstrates that conflicts are normal experiences which people should be able to resolve through peaceful means.

3

The main objective should be to reach fair agreements that benefit all parties, rather than trying to ‘win’ through argument.



Handout 10 - Stages of Conflict Handout:

Stages of Conflict Handout (Activity 1)

A small difference in opinion.

Feelings start to have a direct impact on the way the issue progresses.

The conflict becomes bigger as people show louder behaviour or go into protection mode.

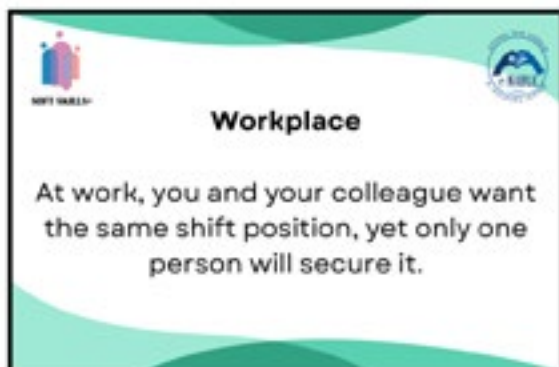
The conflict begins to turn hostile and abusive.

Stages of Conflict Handout (Activity 1)

The conflict either comes to an end or is resolved through conflict resolution.

Handout 11 - Conflict Resolution Role-Playing Cards:

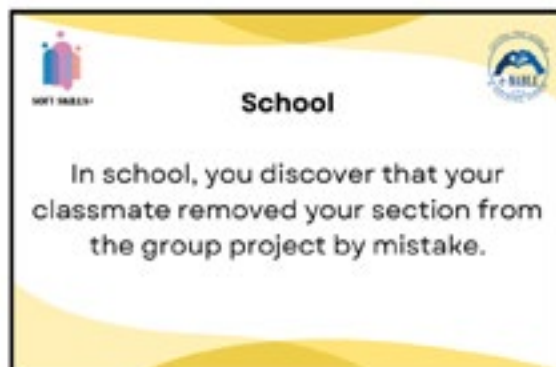
Conflict Resolution Role-Playing Cards (Activity 2)



Workplace

At work, you and your colleague want the same shift position, yet only one person will secure it.


This card has a green wavy border at the top and bottom. It features a 'SOFT SKILLS+' logo in the top left and a circular logo with a mountain and the text 'CONFLICT RESOLUTION' in the top right.



School

In school, you discover that your classmate removed your section from the group project by mistake.

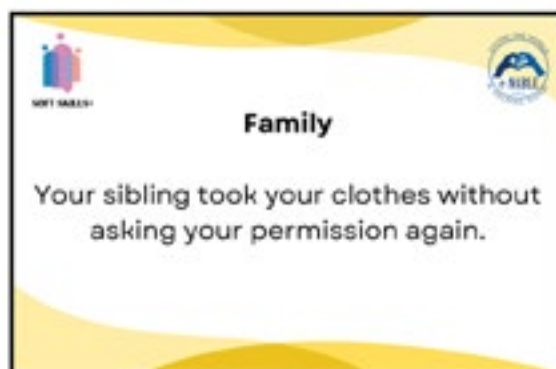
This card has a yellow wavy border at the top and bottom. It features a 'SOFT SKILLS+' logo in the top left and a circular logo with a mountain and the text 'CONFLICT RESOLUTION' in the top right.



Friendship

Your feelings are hurt because your friend continues to ignore you.





This card has a green wavy border at the top and bottom. It features a 'SOFT SKILLS+' logo in the top left and a circular logo with a mountain and the text 'CONFLICT RESOLUTION' in the top right.



Family

Your sibling took your clothes without asking your permission again.

This card has a yellow wavy border at the top and bottom. It features a 'SOFT SKILLS+' logo in the top left and a circular logo with a mountain and the text 'CONFLICT RESOLUTION' in the top right.

Name: _____	Date: _____
<h2 style="margin: 0;">REFLECTION WORKSHEET</h2> <div style="text-align: right;"></div>	
<p>Activity 3 - Finding the Win-Win Solution</p> <p>1 The Conflict... Describe a conflict (what happened?):</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>2 Who was involved?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>3 Points of View... What emotions and ideas drove you during this encounter?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>4 Do the people in this situation truly feel their partner understood their point of view?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>➤ Why or why not?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>5 Finding the Solution... Which outcome between the two parties resolved their disagreement?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>6 Reflection... Which conflict-handling procedures were practised?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Active Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Staying Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Taking Turns Speaking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Offering Solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Apologising <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"><div></div><div></div></div>	

Social Skills – Lesson Plan 5



Expressing Opinions with Respect – Speaking Confidently Without Causing Conflict

The objective of the activity is to teach learners appropriate methods for both expressing their ideas and disagreeing respectfully, in a way that maintains social relationships.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners should express their views with clarity and confidence.
- Use polite language when you need to disagree with others.
- Understanding to view different viewpoints while preventing disputes from escalating.

Materials:

- Handout 13: "Respectful vs. Disrespectful Language" Examples.
- Handout 14: Debate Role-Play Cards.
- Handout 15: Reflection Worksheet Lesson Plan 5.

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Understanding Respectful vs. Disrespectful Communication (10 minutes)

- The educator provides two sentences as examples to learners which feature honour-based and offensive language, such as:
 - Disrespectful: "That's a stupid idea!"
 - Respectful: "That makes sense to me, yet I have a different way of seeing the matter."
- Group discussion:
 - Discuss with learners how tone of voice affects how others receive a message.
 - Ask learners: Has anyone ever dismissed your thoughts to your face? How did it make you feel?

Activity 1: Debate Role-Play (20 minutes)

- Provide learners with the debate role-play cards (handout 14), which contain a range of topics. Working in pairs or small groups, learners must use these cards during the debates. Some of the topics to be discussed respectfully include:
 - Should learners have less homework?
 - Should people choose to live in large urban areas or smaller community settings?
 - Should schools begin teaching essential survival skills?
- Each pair practises expressing their opinions twice using a structured debate format. Everyone should listen without interrupting. Pairs will look for areas of agreement, even if they disagree.
- **Group discussion:**
 - How did you feel while expressing your opinions?
 - Did using respectful methods change the debate experience?
 - Did the discussion remain calm because of specific techniques used? Which ones were effective?

Activity 2: Reflection Worksheet (10 minutes)

- Using the reflection worksheet (handout 15), learners should answer the following questions about their perspective during the previous activities:
 - Do I need a clearer way to share my thoughts so others can understand me?
 - Do I need to speak in a way that doesn't hurt other people's feelings?
 - Do I need to learn how to disagree with others in a kind and respectful manner?

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- Learners should complete a personal reflection.
- They should write about a situation where they disagreed with another person, then respond to the following questions:
 - Was the conversation friendly, or did people start arguing?
 - What is the best way for me to respond now, based on what I've learned today?
- **Pair discussion** - Each learner selects one key message from the activities to share with their partner. The educator then asks:
 - Next time you have a disagreement, will you use kind words?
 - What will you do to maintain a calm and respectful tone of voice?
- **Real-world challenge - learners set a goal:** Learners should set a goal to complete the lesson. They should apply what they have learned and reflect on the outcomes before the next session.
 - I plan to maintain respectful speech during discussions about _____.

Tips for Educators

1

Reinforce the message that everyone's opinion matters.

2

Learners should give as much attention to listening as they do to speaking.

3

Help learners understand that expressing different viewpoints through disagreement is not the same as arguing, the goal is to understand multiple perspectives.



Handout 13 - "Respectful vs. Disrespectful Language" Examples:

Respectful vs. Disrespectful Language Cards (Activity 1)



Handout 14 - Debate Role-Play Cards:

Debate Role-Play Cards (Activity 2)




Express your thoughts confidently,
but listen carefully to others & handle disagreements politely.

Examples of topics:

- Should schools allow students to use their phones during lessons?
- Which offers better opportunities: small-town living or big city life?
- Should schools teach practical skills alongside regular academic subjects?
- Do video games improve or weaken social interaction skills?

Name:	Date:
-------	-------

REFLECTION WORKSHEET



Activity 3 - The Respectful Way

1 To what degree are you self-assured when sharing your views with other people?

☐ Confident ☐ Not Confident

2 During the process of the activity, what approach helped you remain peaceful and polite?



3 During the conversation... What were your emotions when others approached you first?


4 When you spoke about your ideas, did the others accept what you had to say? Why or why not?

5 Language Awareness... List one phrase that shows disrespect and a polite alternative to protect someone's feelings.

6 Moving Forward... Describe your thoughts on the following:

- ☐ "That's interesting! Here's how I think about it..."
- ☐ I am ready to discuss this situation in a new way.
- ☐ Establish a personal goal to talk respectfully about the specified topic.





Social Skills – Lesson Plan 6



Building Self-Confidence in Social Situations – Overcoming Fear and Speaking Up

The objective of the activity is to help learners build social confidence through practising communication, body language, and self-expression skills.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be able to recognise social situation stressors and identify the causes of their nervousness.
- Practise confidence-building techniques.
- Learners will feel more comfortable speaking during group sessions.

Materials:

- Handout 16: Confidence Checklist.
- Handout 17: "Speaking Up" Challenge Cards.
- Handout 18: Reflection Worksheet Lesson Plan 6.

Duration:

45 minutes

Activities:

Introduction and Warm-up: Confidence Checklist (10 minutes)

- Learners use the confidence checklist (handout 16) to evaluate their feelings of confidence across various situations. Some of the main topics include:
 - New interactions with people do not make me feel uncomfortable.
 - I actively skip opportunities to speak when many people are present.
 - My nervousness increases whenever I want to share my thoughts in public.
- The discussion explores the specific factors that cause shyness or confidence in people.

Activity 1: "Speaking Up" Challenge (20 minutes)

- Provide learners with the "speaking up" challenge cards (handout 17). The challenge card includes speaking prompts that learners respond to by writing randomly each time.
 - Introduce the hobbies that bring you joy.
 - Describe your ideal day.
 - Who is the most admired person you would like to meet?
- Each learner then uses a 30-second period to speak according to the given prompt. Remember to use a strong voice, maintain eye contact, and display positive body language!

Activity 2: Reflection & Goal Setting (10 minutes)

- Learners write down how they would handle the following:
 - A situation in which I would like to show more confidence.
 - To improve my confidence, I will make one small change.

Evaluation (5 minutes)

- **Personal reflection:** Learners should spend time reflecting on and answering the following:
 - I feel nervous when I have to speak in certain situations.
 - What did I learn today that can help me feel more confident when I speak?
- Learners write their answers in the confidence growth plan (handout 18). This section of the worksheet is where they set personal goals.
- **Pair or small group sharing:** Learners talk in pairs or small groups. They share what they learned and how they felt. The educator asks:
 - How did you speak today? Were you calm and clear?
 - Does small talk help you feel more comfortable speaking in larger groups?
- **Confidence challenge:** Each time, learners set a goal to help them feel more confident when speaking the following week. For example:
 - I will ask one question in class.
 - I will talk to someone new at lunch.
 - I will share how it went at the next meeting.

Tips for Educators

1

Eliminate judgement by creating a safe space where learners feel free to express themselves.

2

Building confidence requires positive reinforcement. Peers should support one another by practising together and fostering a community of motivated learners.

3

Help learners establish and follow small goals to improve their communication confidence.



Handout 16 - Confidence Checklist:

How I Feel in Social Situations (Activity 1)

My Confidence Checklist

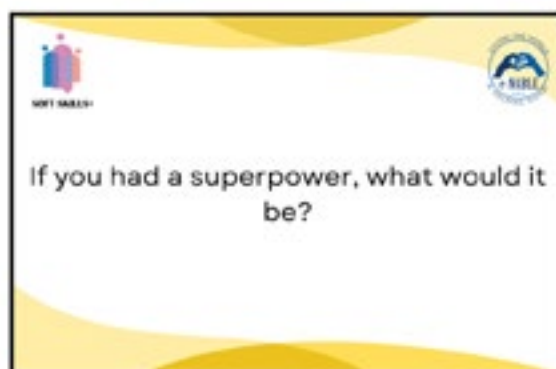
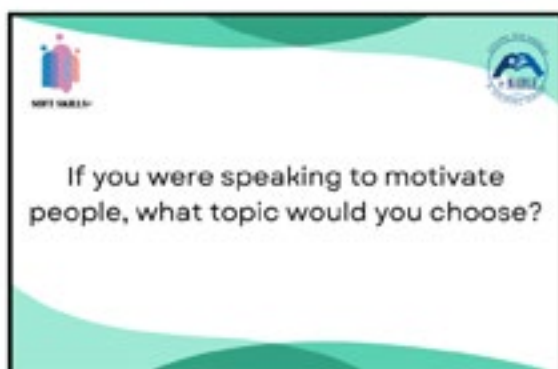
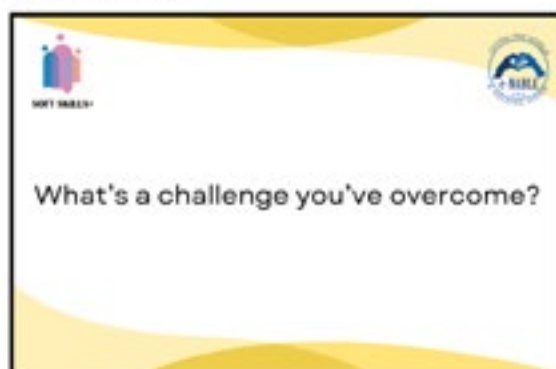
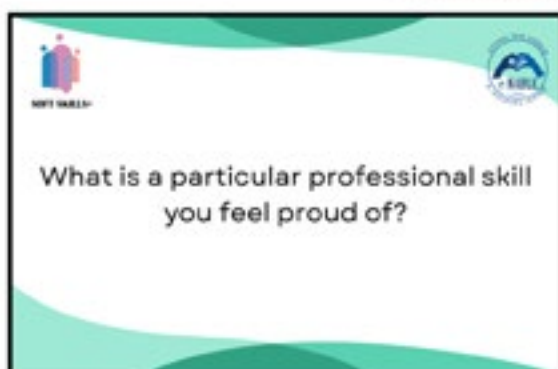
Rate how much you agree with each statement:
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introducing myself to new people gives me a feeling of self-assurance. | <input type="checkbox"/> I isolate myself from group discussions and stay quiet when I need to share ideas. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I speak easily and without stress when I face an audience. | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel like others are evaluating my thoughts when we discuss things. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I show confident body language in conversations. | <input type="checkbox"/> My emotional state remains stable when I do not speak formally. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I comfortably share my thoughts with others. | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel nervous when I have to make eye contact while speaking. |

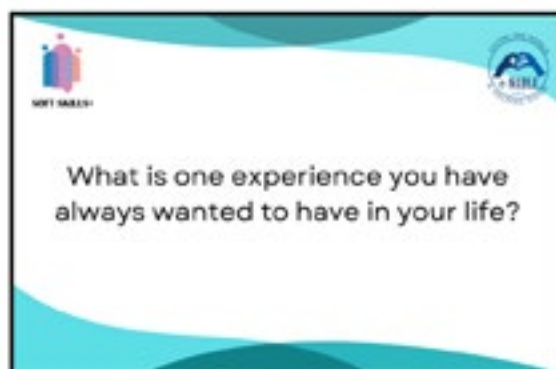
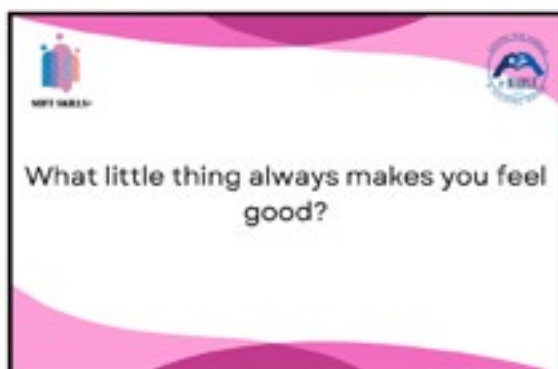
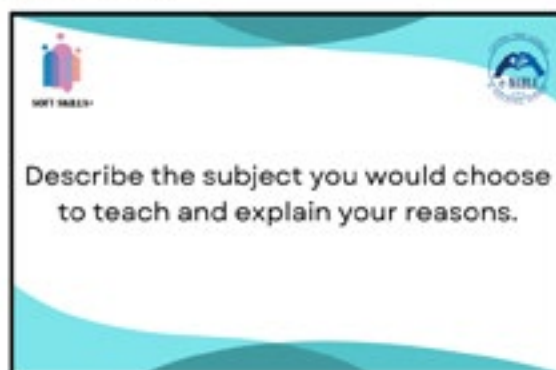
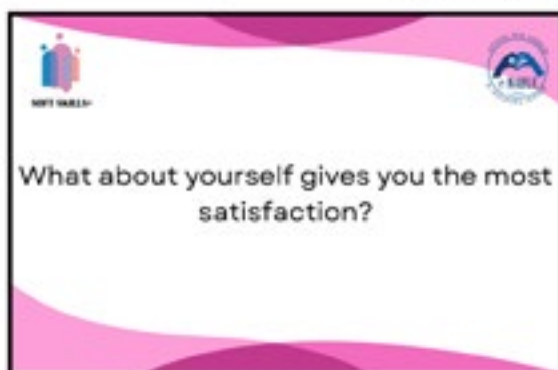


Handout 17 - "Speaking Up" Challenge Cards:

Engaging Prompts (Activity 2)



Engaging Prompts (Activity 2)



Name:

Date:

REFLECTION WORKSHEET



Activity 3 - My Confidence Growth Plan

- 1** My Current Confidence Level... Rate your self-assurance using the statements below and tick the response that best matches your feelings:
 - ☐ The act of meeting new people does not create anxiety in me.
 - ☐ When a lot of people gather, I choose not to participate.
 - ☐ The anticipation of presenting makes me feel anxious.
 - ☐ I maintain confidence when interacting with my close friends.
 - ☐ The fear of judgment by others distracts me while speaking.

- 2** Today's Speaking Experience... Describe your emotions right before starting your 30-second public speech.

- 3** Did your body movements support or weaken your message during the presentation?

- 4** My Confidence Growth Plan
 - The area in which I want to improve my confidence is
_____.
 - My daily action this week to boost self-assurance will be
_____.
 - I will repeat this statement to keep my spirits up:
_____.

Additional Resources

Jacob, U. S., Edozie, I. S., & Pillay, J. (2022). Strategies for enhancing social skills of individuals with intellectual disability: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Rehabilitation Sciences*, 3, 968314. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fresc.2022.968314>

Georgoula, E., & Koustriava, E. (2024). Enhancing social-communication and behavior skills in adolescents with intellectual disabilities through computerized cognitive training. *International Journal of Instruction*, 17(4), 421–440. https://www.e-iji.net/dosyalar/iji_2024_4_24.pdf

Kumazaki, H., Muramatsu, T., Yoshikawa, Y., Matsumoto, Y., & Kikuchi, M. (2023). Social skills training using multiple humanoid robots for individuals with autism spectrum conditions. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 14, 1168837. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2023.1168837>

Indirani, V. (2024). An analysis of communication and social skills in individuals with intellectual disabilities. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 9(2), 130–134. <https://www.ijnrd.org/papers/IJNRD2402018.pdf>

Birri, M., et al. (2022). *Best practices in workforce development for adults with disabilities*. Unified Work. <https://unifiedwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/MDI-Literature-Review.pdf>

Patti, A., Vona, F., Barberio, A., Buttiglione, M. D., Crusco, I., Mores, M., & Garzotto, F. (2024). Training attention skills in individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders using virtual reality and eye-tracking technology. *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2404.15960. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.15960>

Chen, W.-C., Berrezueta-Guzman, S., & Wagner, S. (2024). Task-based role-playing VR game for supporting intellectual disability therapies. *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2412.11603. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.11603>

Kourtesis, P., et al. (2023). Virtual reality training of social skills in autism spectrum disorder: An examination of acceptability, usability, user experience, social skills, and executive functions. *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2304.07498. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2304.07498>

Leichert, J., et al. (2025). Virtual agent tutors in sheltered workshops: A feasibility study on attention training for individuals with intellectual disabilities. *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2504.06031. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2504.06031>



SOFT SKILLS+




DIGITAL MEDIA ZONE



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. Project number: 2024-1-HR01-KA220-ADU-000247169


CC BY-NC-SA 4.0