Establish and maintain working relationships

Overview

This standard covers establishing and maintaining working relationships and working effectively with other people. This includes understanding your role and responsibilities and those of others, communicating clearly, co-operating with others to offer or seek assistance, managing differences or problems and helping to improve ways of working together.

This could be with your colleagues, supervisors or managers or people external to your team, department or organisation, including suppliers and customers. It may include working with volunteers, trainees, temporary or agency staff, people on secondment or work experience. It could involve working with people from different backgrounds and cultures, people with disabilities or health issues or those whose first language is not the same as your own.

This standard is suitable for all those who need to establish and maintain working relationships as part of their work role.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. present a professional image of yourself and those you represent
2. confirm the requirements, responsibilities, priorities and limitations of your role
3. carry out your role in accordance with the organisation's procedures
4. report to the relevant person when circumstances prevent the achievement of work priorities, activities and responsibilities
5. suggest ideas that would improve or add to the success of the operations within the organisation
6. identify the roles, responsibilities, constraints and limitations of the people within the working relationship
7. build relationships that support your work
8. establish ways of working and effective communication methods with those within the working relationship to ensure smooth operations
9. communicate in a way that supports productive working relationships and facilitates understanding
10. be aware of non-verbal communication messages
11. adapt your communication so that it can be understood by the different people you are working with
12. respond to requests from colleagues for assistance with work requirements or explain when it is not possible to respond to their requests
13. request assistance with work requirements from colleagues within your area of responsibility
14. maintain confidentiality and protect intellectual property rights
15. work co-operatively with others to achieve results, adapting your role and behaviour accordingly
16. accept that other people will have different views and expectations to you and maintain respect for them
17. treat people as individuals and not according to expectations or stereotypes
18. deal proactively with things that go wrong with working relationships
19. evaluate your contribution to working relationships, how well you co-operated with others and how you could improve in the future

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the appropriate professional codes of conduct when establishing and maintaining working relationships
2. the ways in which you can present a professional image of yourself and those you represent
3. your own and your colleagues' roles and responsibilities
4. the circumstances that may prevent you from fulfilling your required work activities, priorities and responsibilities and the action to take
5. the reasons why working relationships are important and how they can be maintained and improved
6. the legal and organisational requirements for equality and protected characteristics
7. the importance of establishing the roles, responsibilities, constraints and limitations of the people you are working with and the limits of your responsibility and authority
8. how team dynamics impact on behaviours, including cultural and geographic values
9. the reasons why effective communication is important
10. how to determine the methods of communicating that are appropriate for the people you are working with and what needs to be communicated
11. the ways communication may need to be adapted for internal and external use
12. how to request assistance, and respond to requests for assistance, from colleagues within your area of responsibility
13. the challenges in communicating with people whose language, dialect or way of speaking is not the same as your own and how these can be overcome
14. the ways to minimise misunderstanding and improve communication
15. the importance of maintaining good listening skills
16. how your use of non-verbal communication may be interpreted by others and how theirs may affect your perceptions of them
17. the importance of not using derogatory statements in a work situation
18. the importance of maintaining confidentiality and requirements with respect to intellectual property
19. how to manage differences or problems with working relationships and the organisational procedures for resolving differences and escalating problems where

required

20. the importance of evaluating your contribution to working relationships and how this can be done

Glossary

Disability: the term is used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, and various types of chronic disease.

Methods of communication could include:

- face to face
- telephone
- radio
- video link
- written message
- verbal message
- electronic message
- email
- social media
- apps
- formal written correspondence

Non-verbal communication: body language, tone of voice, behaviour

Protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex

- sexual orientation

Ways to minimise misunderstanding and improve communication: for example, taking the time to listen closely, checking your understanding, learning the conventions for introductions and greetings, using gestures, avoiding idioms, explaining acronyms, using pictures and diagrams, learning some phrases in the other person's language.

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