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# CURRICULUM

## Lesson Plans

# MODULE 7 – Making requests at the workplace

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## Lesson 1: Making requests at the workplace

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Lesson title	Making requests at workplace
<b>Objectives</b>	<p><b>The objectives of Lesson 1 are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practise the steps of setting boundaries/making requests.</li> <li>• Role play making requests.</li> <li>• Role play setting boundaries.</li> </ul>
<b>Week</b>	Week 2
<b>Duration</b>	1.5 hours
<b>Key terms</b>	<p><b>Making requests</b></p> <p><b>Boundaries</b></p> <p><b>Scenarios in the work environment</b></p> <p><b>Active listening skills</b></p> <p><b>Role play</b></p>
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<p><b>With the completion of Lesson 1 participants will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Apply the steps for setting boundaries/making requests in specific situations.</li> <li>✓ Test setting boundaries/ making requests in work-related scenarios.</li> <li>✓ Use active listening skills.</li> <li>✓ Identify the steps for setting boundaries/making requests in the role play of other participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning methods</b>	<p><b>Role play</b></p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Dyadic work</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Video</b></p> <p><b>Scenarios</b></p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Continuous performance evaluation</b>

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
Brief settling into the session	5 min The facilitator will introduce any new members to the group and allow some time for participants to settle in.	Discussion

**MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 1**

Mindfulness exercise	5 min <b>Purpose:</b> To ground participants in the here and now. To learn how to observe our thoughts. <b>Procedure:</b> “Leaves on a Stream” Exercise: 1. Sit in a comfortable position and either close your eyes or rest them gently on a fixed spot in the room. 2. Visualize yourself sitting beside a gently flowing stream with leaves floating along the surface of the water. Pause 10 seconds. 3. For the next few minutes, take each thought that enters your mind and place it on a leaf... let it float by. Do this with each thought – pleasurable, painful, or neutral. Even if you have joyous or enthusiastic thoughts, place them on a leaf and let them float by. 4. If your thoughts momentarily stop, continue observing the stream. Sooner or later, your thoughts will come back. Pause 20 seconds. 5. Allow the stream to flow at its own pace. Don’t try to speed it up and rush your thoughts along. You’re not trying to rush the leaves along or “get rid” of your thoughts. You are allowing them to come and go at their own pace.	Guided imagery
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Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>6. If your mind says “This is dumb,” “I’m bored,” or “I’m not doing this right” place those thoughts on leaves, too, and let them pass. Pause 20 seconds.</p> <p>7. If a leaf gets stuck, allow it to hang around until it’s ready to float by. If the thought comes up again, watch it float by again. Pause 20 seconds.</p> <p>8. If a difficult or painful feeling arises, simply acknowledge it. Say to yourself, “I notice myself having a feeling of boredom/impatience/frustration.” Place those thoughts on leaves and allow them float along.</p> <p>9. From time to time, your thoughts may hook you and distract you from being fully present in this exercise. This is normal. As soon as you realize that you have become sidetracked, gently bring your attention back to the visualization exercise.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>Participants will observe the process of their thinking without reacting. This will allow a stronger focus to the here and now.</p>	

**MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 2**

<p><b>Brief Check-In and Review of in-between Session Work</b></p>	<p><b>20 min</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>To have a short review of the steps for setting boundaries/making requests that were discussed in the previous activity.</p> <p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p>The steps will be written on a board/flipchart or as handouts.</p>	<p><b>Question and discussion</b></p>
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Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>BOUNDARY-SETTING COMMUNICATION HANDOUT 1 (Appendix 1).</p> <p><b>Discussion Point:</b> Discuss the steps with the participants using these guiding questions:</p> <p><i>What does describing the situation mean?</i></p> <p>Describing means to give the facts of a situation that can be or already is problematic to you, to state what you are asking for.</p> <p><i>Can you give an example?</i></p> <p>If participants don't come up with an example, the facilitator can give them a situation as an example to fill in the steps.</p> <p><b>Situation:</b> A co-worker (who has the next shift) is asking for the fifth time in 2 weeks to fill in for him, because he/she will be late for work, but they don't give too many reasons for being late. This is getting a bit uncomfortable for you, so you want to set a boundary.</p> <p><b>Describing:</b> In the last 2 weeks, you asked me 5 times to cover for you at work.</p> <p><i>What is the purpose of expressing?</i></p> <p>Expressing means to let the other person know how you feel about the situation. The purpose of this is to work towards effective communication.</p> <p><i>Can you give an example?</i></p> <p><b>Expressing:</b> This is inconvenient for me because I get home later.</p> <p><i>Is asserting similar to expressing?</i></p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>What is the difference?</p> <p>Asserting refers to asking for something or setting a boundary, while expressing refers to saying how you feel about the situation.</p> <p>Can you give an example?</p> <p>I can't do this so often for you.</p> <p>What is the purpose of reinforcing?</p> <p>Reinforcing means to link your request to a possible positive consequence for the other person in case he/she agrees to your request.</p> <p>Can you give an example?</p> <p><b>Reinforcing:</b> I believe that if we find a way to resolve this our relationship will be much improved.</p> <p>What about negotiation? Negotiation means that you give something in order to get something back: offer solutions, ask for solutions, maybe compromise your request.</p> <p><b>Negotiation:</b> Maybe you can ask another coworker to fill in for you sometimes or how can we solve this problem?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Did you get the chance to go through these steps since our last encounter?</li> <li>➤ How was that for you?</li> <li>➤ Have you faced any difficulties?</li> <li>➤ Which step is more difficult for you, if any?</li> </ul> <p>What listening skills help you go through these steps?</p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>This question is intended to introduce the review of listening skills.</p> <p><b>Note to the facilitator.</b> In case participants say they did not practice the steps, it would be important to see what the reasons/obstacles were e.g., not understanding the steps, not finding them useful (here the facilitator should give reasons why the steps are useful), not finding this skill appropriate in the prison context, etc.</p> <p>Next, the facilitator will make a short review of the listening skills introduced in the first activities. See Appendix 1 for a short reminder.</p> <p><b>Discussion Point:</b> How are these skills helping?</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>A review of DEAR MAN skills is presented in this section and an opportunity to review any difficulties is considered.</p>	
<b>MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 3</b>		
<p>✦ Making a request vs a demand</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>To refer to the difference between making a request and communicating in a demanding way.</p> <p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p>“Like setting boundaries, making requests is essential to effective reintegration in the workplace. Sometimes we need to ask for help, facilities, or benefits. The way we make these requests will influence the response that we get. We can do it as a <b>demand</b> or as a <b>request</b>.”</p>	<p><b>Presentation</b> <b>Group work</b> <b>Discussion</b> <b>Rapid rehearsal</b></p>



Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p><b>Discussion Point:</b></p> <p>What do you think is the difference between them?</p> <p>The facilitator uses the flipchart to write down the responses.</p> <p>Demanding means that you are asking something in an aggressive manner (aggressive behavior: raised voice, large gestures, invading the other person’s personal space), or not taking into account how that could impact on the other person, or as if you were entitled. On the other hand, requesting means that you ask for something that you need but in an assertive manner (you take into consideration how your request could impact on the other person, you talk politely with a normal tone of voice, and still sticking to what you need).</p> <p>The facilitator will present a scenario and give two options to approach it. The facilitator (as the requester) can role play the approaches with one of the participants or with the co-facilitator (if the case).</p> <p><b>Scenario:</b></p> <p>Somebody needs a day off or to leave earlier from work because they have a family situation (need to take their child/or a family member to a doctor’s appointment). So, they have to talk to their coordinator.</p> <p><b>First approach:</b> the person says only that she/he needs to leave earlier tomorrow because they have a family situation. The manager says that this is not possible. Then the participant starts demanding (being aggressive – higher voice, rigid posture, getting closer to the manager).</p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p><b>Second approach:</b> the person describes the family situation, then expresses their request (gives a brief rationale for the request), they are assertive (asks the coordinator if they can do that for them), they suggest a positive outcome if the request is granted (gives time to think about it or expresses appreciation – I would appreciate if you could do that for me) and negotiate (be willing to give in order to get – e.g., to stay a few hours more on other working days, or asking for alternative solutions). Their voice is calm, open posture, let space between the participant and the manager.</p> <p><b>Note to facilitator:</b></p> <p>1. For the first approach the discussion is:</p> <p><b>Requester:</b> Hello, I need to leave work earlier tomorrow.</p> <p><b>Manager:</b> Why is that?</p> <p><b>Requester:</b> Because I have to solve some issues. (Starts raising voice) I'm doing my job, I didn't miss once, so is this a problem, or what?</p> <p>2. For the second approach the discussion is:</p> <p><b>Requester:</b> Hello. My youngest child has a health issue, and we got a doctor's appointment for the day after tomorrow at 12. It would be important for me to see this doctor to find out what is the problem with my son. Can I leave earlier that day? I would appreciate if you could grant me this. Maybe I can do some extra hours in the next days, if necessary.</p> <p><b>Discussion Point:</b> Which one of the approaches was a demand and which one a request?</p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p><b>The first one was a demand and the second a request.</b></p> <p>Q: How did the first requester act?</p> <p>A: He became aggressive very fast.</p> <p>Q: How was his/her voice?</p> <p>A: He/she got to raise his/her voice quickly.</p> <p>Q: What did he/she say?</p> <p>A: He/she just demanded leave without giving a rationale for it, as if, he/she was entitled,</p> <p>Q: How do you think the coordinator was feeling during this interaction?</p> <p>A: Irritated, angry. Maybe unsafe.</p> <p>Q: What do you think the result can be for this approach?</p> <p>A: It could be that he/she won't get to leave earlier from work, or maybe he/she does, but the manager might change his opinion on him/her.</p> <p>Q: How did the second requester act?</p> <p>A: He/she brought up the subject calmer, more confidently.</p> <p>Q: How was his/her voice?</p> <p>A: A normal tone, calm.</p> <p>Q: What did he/she say?</p> <p>A: He/she presented his/her need, a rationale for it and even came up with solutions, if necessary.</p> <p>Q: How do you think the coordinator was feeling during this interaction?</p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>A: Appreciated, safe.</p> <p>Q: What do you think the result can be for this approach?</p> <p>A: It is very likely that she got to leave early, and the manager appreciated his/her behavior.</p> <p>Q: Which approach did you use in the past when you needed something from others? How effective was it?</p> <p>Would you choose a different approach now? Why?</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>Participants are introduced to the significance of making requests effectively in the workplace, as it can impact on the response received. By emphasizing the distinction between making requests and demands, participants gain insight into effective communication strategies for seeking help, facilities, or benefits in the workplace.</p>	
<b>MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 4</b>		
<b>Making a request vs a demand</b>	<p><b>10 min</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>To acknowledge that polite request is a skill.</p> <p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p>Below is a video with examples of short polite requests – similar to the questions of the listening skills:</p> <p><b>Discussion point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How do you think these expressions can impact on the other person’s response to our request?</li> <li>➤ Did you ever use any of them?</li> </ul>	<b>Video Discussion</b>

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>➤ How helpful did you find them?</p> <p>Expressions used in the video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you know if ...</li> <li>• I wonder if I could ...</li> <li>• Could you tell me how I can ....</li> <li>• Would you mind ...</li> <li>• Can you tell me ...</li> </ul> <p><b>Rapid rehearsal.</b> Write these expressions on a board/flipchart. Ask participants to turn to the person sitting next to them and make a request using these expressions then switch roles</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>Participants will learn how to make requests using polite conversation starters. This section will allow them to consider the difference between a request and a demand.</p>	
<p><b>MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 5</b></p>		
<p>✦ <b>Role play on making requests</b></p>	<p><b>25 min</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>To practise the steps of making a request/setting boundaries.</p> <p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p>Participants will get into small groups and each group will get 1 scenario. They will be asked to read the scenario, review the steps, create an effective request and practise it (and switch roles). The participants will be given a handout with scenarios and instructions. See Appendix 2: SCENARIOS OF REQUESTS HANDOUT 2.</p>	<p><b>Role play Scenarios</b></p>

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	<p>During the assignment, the facilitator can offer help to the participants.</p> <p><b>Scenario 1</b></p> <p>I heard about an opportunity of training/education that would suit my position and maybe get me a promotion, so I want to talk to my supervisor about it and ask if I could join as a member of our team/organisation.</p> <p><b>Scenario 2</b></p> <p>I had an argument with one of my colleagues about a task and he/she did not give me the chance to express my opinion regarding how to approach that task. The discussion escalated into a fight (verbal) and everyone blamed me. I want a chance to explain myself.</p> <p><b>Scenario 3</b></p> <p>I want to change my schedule due to the fact that I have no help with the kids.</p> <p><b>Scenario 4</b></p> <p>I made a mistake at work. My coordinator/manager heard about it and invited me into his/her office and started to criticise me. How should I react to that based on what I have learned so far?</p> <p><b>Scenario 5</b></p> <p>Me and my roommates in the penitentiary have to plan an activity. How do I express my ideas in order to be heard?</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p>	

Steps Duration	Description	Resources, activities & materials
	In this section participants continue to practise making requests using a healthy and appropriate communication style.	
<b>MODULE 7. Lesson 1: Activity 6</b>		
<b>Conclusion / questions</b>	<p data-bbox="300 719 368 815"><b>5 min</b></p> <p data-bbox="395 719 1264 927"><b>Purpose:</b> To reinforce key points covered in the lesson, to encourage participant engagement through questions, and introduce the topic of the next module as a continuation of the current one.</p> <p data-bbox="395 958 564 999"><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p data-bbox="395 1032 1264 1182">The facilitator emphasizes the key points of the lesson, ensuring participants have a clear understanding of the concepts discussed.</p> <p data-bbox="395 1216 1264 1366">Participants are encouraged to ask questions, fostering an interactive learning environment and addressing any uncertainties or concerns they may have.</p> <p data-bbox="395 1400 1264 1550">Finally, the facilitator introduces the topic of the next module, providing a broad overview of what will be covered to prepare participants for future sessions.</p> <p data-bbox="395 1583 549 1624"><b>Summary:</b></p> <p data-bbox="395 1657 1264 1807">This session effectively reinforces participants' understanding of key lesson points and encourages active participation through questions.</p>	<b>Key points</b>

# APPENTICES

## Appendix 1

### HANDOUT 1: BOUNDARY-SETTING COMMUNICATION

<b>1. Describe the situation:</b>
WHAT ARE YOU REACTING TO. WHAT BOUNDARY HAVE BEEN BROKEN. WHAT ARE YOU ASKING FOR.
<b>2. Express Clearly:</b>
HOW YOU FEEL OR WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THE SITUATION.
<b>3. Assert Wishes:</b>
ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT.
<b>4. Reinforce:</b>
REINFORCE THE OTHER PERSON.
<b>5. Negotiate:</b>
OFFER AND ASK FOR ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS.



## Appendix 2

### HANDOUT 2: SCENARIOS OF REQUESTS

#### Scenario 1

I heard about an opportunity of training/education that would suit my position and maybe get me a promotion, so I want to talk to my supervisor about it and ask if I could join as a member of the team/organisation.

**Describe the situation:** what are you asking for

**Express clearly:** what you believe about the situation

**Assert wish:** ask for what you want

**Providing either a positive outcome or expressing appreciation:** express appreciation for understanding or highlight possible positive consequences

**Negotiate** (if case): offer or ask for alternative solutions

**Use assertive expressions:** Could I ..., I wonder if ..., etc.

#### Scenario 2

I had an argument with one of my colleagues about a task and he/she did not give me the chance to express my opinion regarding how to approach that task. The discussion escalated into a fight (verbal) and everyone blamed me. I want a chance to explain myself.

**Describe the situation:** what are you asking for

**Express clearly:** what you believe about the situation

**Assert wish:** ask for what you want

**Reinforce the other person:** express appreciation for understanding or highlight possible positive consequences

**Negotiate** (if case): offer or ask for alternative solutions

**Use assertive expressions:** Could I ..., I wonder if ..., etc.

### Scenario 3

I want to change my schedule due to the fact that I have no help with the kids.

**Describe the situation:** what are you asking for

**Express clearly:** what you believe about the situation

**Assert wish:** ask for what you want

**Reinforce the other person:** express appreciation for understanding or highlight possible positive consequences

**Negotiate** (if case): offer or ask for alternative solutions

**Use assertive expressions:** Could I ..., I wonder if ..., etc.

### Scenario 4

I made a mistake at work. My coordinator/manager heard about it and invited me into his/her office and started to criticise me. How should I react to that based on what I have learned so far?

**Describe the situation:** what are you asking for

**Express clearly:** what you believe about the situation

**Assert wish:** ask for what you want

**Reinforce the other person:** express appreciation for understanding or highlight possible positive consequences

**Negotiate** (if case): offer or ask for alternative solutions

**Use assertive expressions:** Could I ..., I wonder if ..., etc.

## Scenario 5

Me and my roommates in the penitentiary have to plan an activity. How do I express my ideas in order to be heard?

**Describe the situation:** what are you asking for

**Express clearly:** what you believe about the situation

**Assert wish:** ask for what you want

**Reinforce the other person:** express appreciation for understanding or highlight possible positive consequences

**Negotiate** (if case): offer or ask for alternative solutions

**Use assertive expressions:** Could I ..., I wonder if ..., etc.