

BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

for Canada's Substance
Use Workforce v. 2

**EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION**



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction

All behavioural indicators across proficiency levels are examples only and can be adapted or tailored to meet individual organizational needs and mandates.

For CCSA's competencies, substance use is inclusive of situations where professionals are working with individuals who use or have used substances, are diagnosed with a medically recognized substance use disorder or are experiencing harms as a result of using substances. For more information, please refer to the criteria for substance use disorders in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th edition (DSM-5).

For more information on sex- and gender-based analysis (SGBA+), please visit www.ccsa.ca/sex-and-gender-based-analysis

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Articulate both verbally and in writing across a range of technologies in a manner that builds trust, respect and credibility, including in-person and technology-assisted communication (e.g., video conferencing, texting, social media). Checks with the audience to ensure the message is received and mutually understood. Includes active listening skills (attending, being silent, summarizing, paraphrasing, questioning and empathizing), communicating with gender sensitivity, cultural humility and congruent non-verbal communication.

	1 = Foundational	2 = Developing	3 = Proficient	4 = Advanced
EXAMPLES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively listens to understand others without judgment or bias, attending to verbal, emotional and contextual cues 2. Communicates with others honestly, respectfully and sensitively 3. Shares information willingly and in a timely manner 4. Aligns non-verbal communications and tone of voice with the intended message 5. Respects confidentiality of communications, when appropriate 6. Uses a range of communication strategies that respects the needs of diverse audiences 7. Appropriately uses communication technology (e.g., computers, voicemail, mobile phones) to convey messages and information 8. Presents information in a clear and logical manner, using appropriate phrasing, plain language vocabulary and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation 9. Integrates and synthesizes information from appropriate sources into written work 10. Approaches others in different cultures with respect, cultural humility and curiosity 11. Recognizes how language impacts others, choosing to use language that is non-stigmatizing, person-first and oriented toward well-being 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tailors communication to the audience, adapting style, language preference, content and format, as appropriate 2. Reads body language, emotional cues, and verbal and non-verbal cues, and adjusts communication approach accordingly, understanding gender and cultural differences in communication styles 3. Uses open-ended questions and information exchange as an effective means of fostering an open dialogue 4. Elicits comments and responds with non-judgmental feedback on what has been said 5. Prepares required documentation (e.g., assessment, discharge and referral reports) with sufficient clarity, accuracy and level of detail 6. Writes reports that address sensitive issues while cognizant of the potential impact of the information being communicated 7. Recognizes own emotional triggers and the impact they have on communication 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuously hones and polishes communication skills, seeks candid feedback on communication impact and includes self-reflection learning 2. Develops inclusive communication strategies to manage group presentations and facilitations, anticipating potential reactions and preparing accordingly 3. Keeps others informed in a timely manner about issues that may affect them, clearly communicating decisions and underlying reasoning 4. Fosters open communication within the workgroup and with others, choosing the communication method, messages and timing in a strategic manner 5. Conveys information with expression, insight and persuasion when needed; transfers knowledge effectively and efficiently 6. Demonstrates proficiency in a variety of writing styles and ability to effectively adapt style to a diversity of audiences 7. Practices knowledge exchange principles in both written and verbal communication (simple, clear, direct, respectful, timely, evidence-informed) 8. Synthesizes complex documents and ideas from multiple sources into written materials that are relevant to the audience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicates complex issues clearly and credibly with widely varied audiences in various formats (e.g., social media, academic settings, community presentations) 2. Adeptly addresses difficult, on-the-spot questions (e.g., from officials, interest groups, the media) 3. Scans the environment for key information, evidence and messages to inform the development of communication strategies to achieve specific objectives 4. Uses varied communication vehicles and inclusive opportunities to promote dialogue and develop shared understanding and consensus 5. Coaches and inspires others to participate in the knowledge exchange process 6. Produces high-quality written communication documents that address complex organizational issues in a timely fashion (e.g., annual reports, proposals) 7. Writes strategically, from a broad corporate perspective, clearly and articulately presenting a position, while demonstrating an understanding of and respect for the needs and sensitivities of varied audiences within an environment of cultural safety and gender sensitivity

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<p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Maintains regular communication with others 13. Recalls others' main points and takes them into account in own communication 14. Checks own understanding of others' communication (e.g., paraphrases, asks questions) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Uses real world examples to provide context in communication 10. Manages own responses to emotional triggers, considering how such responses may affect others 	