



TALK FOR WORK

Developing communication
skills for the workplace



helps children
communicate

Student Questions

Talk for Work Profile

Student Questions



Name:	Date of completion of the Profile:
Gender:	Date of birth:
What language(s) does the student speak at home?	Age (Years/Months):
Name of person completing the Profile:	Role of person completing the Profile:

Introduction

The *Talk for Work* Profile is to be used with students in secondary schools. It gives a picture of strengths and difficulties in the communication skills needed for work.

The Profile has two parts:

Student Questions, which you complete with the student.

Staff Views, based on your and your colleagues' knowledge of the student.

The scores from both parts contribute to an overall score. See the Profile Guidance for information about how to interpret the scores.

Student Questions

Complete these questions WITH the student present.

Remember, everything you need to say to the student is in ***blue bold italics***.

The ❶ symbol means that you need a resource for the question.

Before you start the questions with the student, take time to introduce the idea of communication skills for work. Here are some ideas:

We're going to do some thinking about your talking and when you get a job. Have you thought about when you might start work, or do your work experience?

Do you have ideas about what you might like to do?

We know that employers or bosses at work really want young people with good communication skills – that's people who can listen carefully, explain things and

understand instructions. So I'm going to ask you a few questions that will help us to think together about things you find easy – and things that are a bit trickier. Sometimes things might be a bit confusing. If that happens, just let me know.

There'll be lots of time to think about what you want to say, but let me know if you need more time.

Any questions?

Understanding

Say: *I'm going to ask you some questions; they're all about when you're on work experience or doing a job. Sometimes I might not explain what you have to do very well, or I might make a mistake, so please let me know if there's anything you don't understand.*

1. Remembering instructions

Can follow complex three-part instructions.

This is a two-part question. Say:

Listen carefully. I'm going to talk to you as if I was your boss and then ask you some questions.

This is an instruction you might get at work from your boss:

'We've got a big order coming in. I want you to make a note of how many boxes we have left, then contact the manager and let her know how many more we'll need for the order.'

Scoring guidance: if the student asks you to repeat the instruction, use this as their response to Question 3 below. You may repeat the instruction once but it must be the whole instruction. Any additional requests to repeat the instruction should score 1.

Now say: *Can you remember what three things you have to do?* Pause while they answer, and remember to give them enough time. Then ask:

What type of work do you think it is? Write down their response.

Scoring guidance: a reasonable guess is 'factory', 'workshop', 'shop'.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Doesn't remember any of the instructions, makes no attempt at guessing the type of work or is completely wrong.	Remembers 1–2 parts of the instruction OR has a reasonable guess at the type of work – but not both.	Remembers 1–2 parts of the instruction, maybe with some details missing, AND has a reasonable guess at the type of work.	Remembers all parts of the instruction, with some details missing, AND has a reasonable guess at the type of work.	Remembers all parts of the instruction fully AND makes a sensible guess at the type of work, possibly adding a rationale.

Then ask: *What would you do to help you remember this instruction?* No score: please write notes below.

Understanding

2. Understands the vocabulary of the workplace

Show their knowledge about a word from the workplace by using it appropriately in a sentence.

Say: *I'm going to say a word. It's a word you might come across at work; if you don't know the word, tell me. If you've heard the word before, tell me what you think it means and then try and put it into a sentence.*

For example, if I said 'customer', you might say 'A customer is someone who goes into a shop to buy things' and then put the word in a sentence – something like 'In a busy shop the customer had to wait a long time to pay'.

The first time you complete the Profile with the student, use the word **colleague**. If they don't know this word, try **workmate**.

The second time you complete the Profile with the student, use the word **stock**. If they don't know this word, try **salary**.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Confused by both unfamiliar words which make no sense. Offers no definition and no sentence.	Has a go at defining one of the words, but gets it wrong. Has a go at the sentence but isn't really aware that they don't know the word.	Gives a reasonable definition OR puts it in a sentence that broadly makes sense, but not both. Appears aware they are not quite right.	Makes a good attempt at both definition AND sentence, although one of them is not quite right. Asks for confirmation/says they're not sure.	Gives a clear, comprehensive definition and puts the word in a good sentence.

3. Checking when not sure or confused

How the student asks about something which is unclear to them.

Note: In this question the sentences you say are intentionally complicated and the request is intentionally impossible (they haven't got all the information they need to complete the task). Only simplify the instructions if the student says they don't understand and asks for help.

Put **Resource 1** on the table with a pen and say:

I'm going to pretend to be your boss. You need to listen to me, and do what I say.

'A delivery has just arrived and this is the original Purchase Order. You need to confirm all the items and quantities against the Purchase Order before the driver leaves. If the driver can't wait for confirmation, only sign the delivery note if you can also write "unchecked" on it. OK, off you go.' Point to the Purchase Order again.

Scoring guidance:

- If you have to repeat the question more than once, score 1.
- If you have to prompt the student more than once, score 1.

If the student seems anxious or upset by not being able to complete the task, say: *Let's go on to the next question. That was a really confusing instruction, wasn't it? Sometimes that happens at work – that's OK.*

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Does something with the Purchase Order. Assumes they know what to do and doesn't ask for any clarification OR just sits looking confused.	Looks puzzled and gives the impression they're not really sure, but still does something with the Purchase Order. Doesn't ask for clarification.	Asks you to repeat the question. This doesn't really help them. Doesn't ask for further clarification, looks confused, picks up the pen but doesn't do or say anything.	Asks for clarification by checking specific parts, e.g. 'What do you mean "confirm"?' or 'Can you say the last bit again?' Accepts your response, but doesn't know what to do and may say so.	Able to say that they don't fully understand and gives a reason, e.g. they don't know what a word means, it's too long. May say that it doesn't make sense and say why, e.g. 'Because I can't see the delivery'.

Understanding total score

Transfer to the Score Summary

Talking

Say: *Now I'm going to ask you to do some talking. I'm going to ask you to explain something to me.*

4. Explaining things clearly

Can explain a common workplace activity in a series of sequential and organised steps.

Use **Resource 2** and say: *Choose one of the cards.*

If the student selects the **Drinks** card, say: *You go into this room; these are people you don't know. It's your job to make them drinks. Tell me everything you need to do to make sure everyone has the drink they want.*

OR

If the student selects the **Sandwiches** card, say: *You go into this room; these are people you don't know. It's your job to go and buy them sandwiches. Tell me everything you need to do to make sure everyone has the sandwich they want.*

Then say: *Remember:*

- *Start at the beginning, right from when you're thinking of what to do.*
- *Say everything that you think about and would need to do.*
- *Include all the details.*

Score guidance: score how well the student gives an organised and sequenced explanation of what they'd need to do.

Make a note of the picture they chose so they you can use the other one the second time they complete the Profile.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
No attempt made at explaining OR is very muddled and disorganised. Doesn't really understand the task.	Explanation starts off OK but then becomes disorganised, with limited information and an incorrect sequence.	Simple explanation with basic detail. Some hesitation, but includes essential information, mostly in the right order.	Well-sequenced explanation, includes all relevant information and is easy to follow.	Good coherent explanation using complex sentences, checks your understanding, adds extra details to make it interesting.

Talking

5. Changes style of talking

Can change their style of talking to suit different people or situations.

Say: *Look again at the card you picked. This time I want you to imagine you're talking to a group of your friends and not to people at work that you don't know. Tell me how you'd change the WAY you talk if this was a group of friends.*

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Can't think of any ways they could change their style of talking.	They can think of 1 or 2 simple general changes that are to do with talking, e.g. 'Feel more relaxed', 'Just mess around'.	They can think of 1 or 2 specific ways to change their talking, e.g. using more slang or choosing different words.	They can think of 3–4 specific ways to change their talking, but may be unable to explain why they'd do this.	They can think of at least 4 ways to change their style of talking. They use specific vocabulary like 'casual' and 'informal'. They may also identify why it's important to change their style of talking (e.g. to look professional in the workplace or to fit in with a group of friends).

6. Speaks clearly

How clear was the student's speech when they were explaining the activity?

This is about how clearly the student speaks and whether you can understand them, i.e. how they use volume and intonation, how smooth their talking is, how quickly they speak, how clearly they say individual words.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Difficult to understand anything of what they were saying.	Overall quite difficult to follow but worked out and understood a few parts of what they were saying.	Some parts were clear and easy to understand, but others less easy to follow because of mumbles, speed, hesitations or volume.	Mostly clear; the occasional long or unfamiliar word gets muddled, but overall managed to get message across.	Good, clear speech, said in an interesting way – you understood everything they said, with no problems.

Talking total score
Transfer to the Score Summary

Interacting with others

Say: *Now I'm going to ask you to think about when you're with other people, how you talk and get on with them. I'm going to ask you to look at some pictures.*

7. Can interpret facial expressions

Use **Resource 3**.

If the student is completing the Profile for the first time, say:

Look at these pictures, and find someone who's angry – just choose one picture.

Now find someone who's confused – just one picture.

And now find someone who looks ashamed – just one picture.

If the student is completing the Profile for the second time, say:

Look at these pictures, and find someone who's depressed – just choose one picture.

Now find someone who's excited – just one picture.

And someone who looks anxious – just one picture.

Scoring guidance: If the student selects the 'Confused' picture for 'Anxious', score this as correct.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Looks at the pictures but makes no attempt at selecting any emotions pictures.	Attempts but gets all wrong.	One emotion correct.	Two emotions correct.	All correct.

Use Resource 5 for Questions 8 and 9.

Show the series of four pictures, and say:

I'm going to show you a series of pictures and describe a situation in someone's job – and I need you to listen carefully.

Read the scenario on the card and then go through the text for each picture. Avoid discussing the scenario with the student as they have two short exercises to do about it.

When you've done this, move on to Questions 8 and 9.

8. Can work out intended behaviour/actions

Say: *Look at this picture* (show the second picture on Resource 5 where Dan is with Person 1). *Look carefully at Dan's face. What do you think Dan is thinking and feeling? Why?*

If no response, circle the second picture with your finger to draw attention to it, and repeat: *Look carefully at Dan's face. What do you think he is thinking and feeling? Why?*

Scoring guidance: an expected response includes recognising that Dan would be:

- Anxious, as he's only been in the office a few days.
- Worried, by the instructions and whether he can remember them.
- Feeling unsure, as to whether he's able to do the task in time.
- Wanting to please his colleague and his boss.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
No answer, unable or not willing to have a stab at working this out.	Has a go at identifying thoughts and feelings but gets it wrong. No explanation or wrong explanation.	Appropriate feelings OR thoughts but not both. Tries to explain why but it's not quite right.	Appropriate thoughts AND feelings. Limited explanation that's acceptable but simplistic.	Identifies appropriate thoughts AND feelings. Gives a good, full reason for this.

9. Can resolve problems relevant to the workplace

This is about being able to make the right choices in the social setting of a workplace.

Use the four pictures on **Resource 5**. Remind the student to look at all of them and the fact they happen one after the other. Say:

By the end here (point to the fourth picture) *Dan is pretty confused; he's been given too many instructions and can't do all the work in time.*

Imagine you are the young person.

Imagine you are Dan.

What would you do to make this situation work out OK – for all the people?

Use **Resource 6**: *To help you we've got five things that Dan can do.*

Read them to the student, then say: *Put Dan's options in the right order, from the best thing he could do, through to the worst thing he could do. You decide – what do you think?*

If students find it difficult to listen to all the information, use **Resource 7** to help them structure their thinking.

Scoring guidance: there are two parts to this question – the order and the explanation.

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Doesn't really try to order them in any way.	Gets the worst thing Dan could do right but unsure about the order of the others. Can't identify the right solution.	Gets 2–3 options in about the right place but explanations are a bit woolly and not really sure about the other 2–3.	Gets 3–4 options in the right place with reasonable explanations/justifications.	All options in an appropriate order with good explanations.

Then ask: *How did you find that activity?* (the last two questions). *Was it easy or difficult? Did you do anything to help you come up with an answer?*

No score: please write notes below.

Interacting with others total score
Transfer to the Score Summary

Say: *That's all – thanks for completing the questions with me. I'll talk to you about your score another time.*

Compliance

How compliant was the student when completing these questions?

Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Not compliant at all, unwilling to answer questions.	Listened to some of the early questions but then lost interest.	Quite compliant, though didn't participate in the more difficult activities.	Compliant – participated for the majority of the questions.	Very compliant – listened and participated throughout.

Now transfer the scores for the Student Questions and Compliance to the Score Summary.