

Communicating in a Virtual Work Environment Study Guide

How to Use This Study Guide

The Study Guide for this course is designed to help you take notes as you're taking the online course "Communicating in a Virtual Work Environment". It is organized in sections that mirror the elements of the course, with plenty of room to make notes and capture your learning.

The use of the Study Guide is optional. Research shows that different people learn differently, and for many, the act of writing something down as you are learning helps to solidify the information in your brain. If you find the Study Guide helpful, use it. If not, feel free to omit it from your learning process.

Course Overview – Communicating in a Virtual Work Environment

In an office-based team, there are many different ways for employees to meet, communicate and connect: by the water cooler, during Monday morning meetings, in the lunchroom, stopping by an office... the list goes on.

How can virtual teams – who may be in different places, time zones or even countries – create opportunities and channels of communication that allow for the same kind of bonding and collaboration?

In this course, we will look at the challenges of communicating in a virtual work environment, some tips on how to make remote communications more effective and how to choose from the many different tools that support communicating effectively with a virtual team.

Learning Objectives – Communicating in a Virtual Work Environment

By the end of this course, you will understand the following:

- How to communicate in a virtual work environment
- The three different modes of communication in a virtual work environment
- The challenges of communicating in a virtual work environment
- Different tips for effective communication in a virtual work environment

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The Challenges

What are the Challenges of Communicating in a Virtual Work Environment?

Challenge	Notes
Working across time zones	
Lack of non-verbal, face to face communication	
Building trust	
Lack of non-work related communication and social interaction	
Working across cultural divides	

Journaling Activity

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A Case Study

Six Top Tips

The Six Top Tips for Communicating Effectively in a Virtual Work Environment

#	Tip	Notes
1	Create some ground rules together	
2	Make space for social connection	
3	Communicate about progress and achievements	
4	Use calendars or schedules to coordinate work across time zones	
5	Check messages carefully before sending and be mindful of tone	
6	Use the best technology you can find that works for your purposes- and test it!	

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A Case Study

Three Types of Communication for Virtual Work Environments

#	Type	Notes
1	Asynchronous communication	
2	Synchronous communication	
3	In-person communication	

Choosing the Right Mode of Communication

Choosing the Right Mode of Communication for the Task

For Your Consideration

Exercise

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Discussion Questions

Discussion questions are used by workgroups who are taking courses concurrently and want to engage in a conversation about the course content. The use of discussion questions is optional.

1. What are the current norms around communication for virtual work environments in your organization?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current tools and strategies?
3. Reflecting on what you have learned in this course, what kind of new strategies, agreements or tools do you think would make the greatest positive impact in your organization?
4. What would need to be in place for a positive change to happen in your organization? Are there any changes you can agree to implement right away?