



# Candidate Resource and Assessment

## BSBWOR401A

# Establish Effective Workplace Relationships



**Whether as an individual, or as part of a group, real progress depends on entering whole-heartedly into the process and being motivated to make you a more deeply satisfied human being.**

*Focusing on your training needs*



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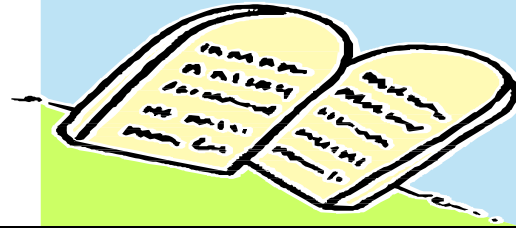
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## Table of Contents



"You're either part of the solution or part of the problem".

Eldridge Cleaver

<b>Focus</b>	5
<b>Qualification Pathways</b>	6
<b>Introduction</b>	7
<b>BSBWOR401A/01 Collect, Analyse and Communicate Information and Ideas</b>	9
Collect relevant information from appropriate sources and analyse and share with the work team to improve work performance	9
Communicate ideas and information in a manner which is appropriate and sensitive to the cultural and social diversity of the audience and any specific needs	
Implement consultation processes to encourage employees to contribute to issues related to their work, and promptly relay feedback to the work team in regard to outcomes	
Seek and value contributions from internal and external sources in developing and refining new ideas and approaches	
Implement processes to ensure that issues raised are resolved promptly or referred to relevant personnel as required	
<b>Key Points – BSBWOR401A/01</b>	19
<b>'True' or 'False' Quiz – BSBWOR401A/01</b>	20
<b>BSBWOR401A/02 Develop Trust and Confidence</b>	21
Treat all internal and external contacts with integrity, respect and empathy	21
Use the organisation's social, ethical and business standards to develop and maintain effective relationships	
Gain and maintain the trust and confidence of colleagues, customers and suppliers through competent performance	
Adjust interpersonal styles and methods to meet organisation's social and cultural environment	
Encourage other members of the work team to follow examples set, according to organisation's policies and procedures	
<b>Key Points – BSBWOR401A/02</b>	34
<b>'True' or 'False' Quiz – BSBWOR401A/02</b>	35




<b>BSBWOR401A/03 Develop and Maintain Networks and Relationships</b>	<b>37</b>
Use networks to identify and build relationships	37
Use networks and other work relationships to provide identifiable benefits for the team and organisation	
<b>Key Points – BSBWOR401A/03</b>	41
<b>'True' or 'False' Quiz – BSBWOR401A/03</b>	42
<b>BSBWOR401A/04 Manage Difficulties into Positive Outcomes</b>	<b>43</b>
Identify and analyse difficulties, and take action to rectify the situation within the requirements of the organisation and relevant legislation	43
Guide and support colleagues to resolve work difficulties	
Regularly review and improve workplace outcomes in consultation with relevant personnel	
Manage poor work performance within the organisation's processes	
Manage conflict constructively within the organisation's processes	
<b>Key Points – BSBWOR401A/04</b>	49
<b>'True' or 'False' Quiz – BSBWOR401A/04</b>	50
<b>Summary</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Assessment Pack</b>	<b>55</b>

## Focus on

# Your Area of Influence

Use considered risk taking in your 'grey' area

## And others will follow you!

<b>Legend</b>	This course is divided into several sections of learning. Each section begins with the title of the element of the unit being taught, a quotation and a graphic related to content across the top of the page.
	This symbol indicates the beginning of new content. The bold title matches the content of the competency and they will help you to find the section to reference for your assessment activities.
	<b>Activity:</b> Whenever you see this symbol, there is an activity to carry out which has been designed to help reinforce the learning about the topic and take some action.
	This symbol is used at the end of a section to indicate the summary key points of the previous section.

## Qualification Pathways



**A goal without a plan is just a wish.**

**Antoine de Saint-Exupery**

### Qualification Pathways

This unit of competency is provided to meet the requirements of BSB07 Business Services Training Package although can be used in a range of different qualifications. The BSB07 Business Services Training Package does not state how a qualification is to be achieved. Rather, Registered Training Organisations are required to use the qualification rules to ensure the needs of the learner and business customer are met. This is to be achieved through the development of effective learning programs delivered in an order which meets the stated needs of nominated candidates and business customers.

### Qualification Rules

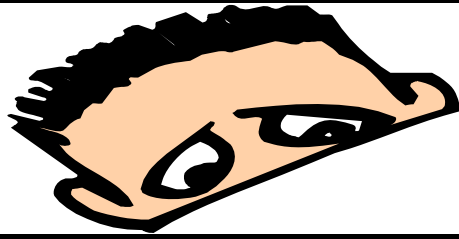
Qualification requirements include core and elective units. The unit mix is determined by specific unit of competency requirements which are stated in the qualification description. Registered Training Organisations then work with learners and business customers to select elective units relevant to the work outcome, local industry requirements and the qualification level.

All vocational education qualifications must lead to a work outcome. BSB07 Business Services Training Package qualifications allows for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to vary programmes to meet:

- Specific needs of a business or group of businesses.
- Skill needs of a locality or a particular industry application of business skills.
- Maximum employability of a group of students or an individual.

When packaging a qualification elective units are to be selected from an equivalent level qualification unless otherwise stated.

## Introduction



"If learning comes through experience, it follows that the more one participates in guided experiences, the more one learns. Therefore venturing into uncharted waters - and experiencing the failures that may occur - is an important part of organisational learning."

Gould, DiBella, Nevis

### Introduction

This unit of competency is all about being able to implement effective workplace relationships. It will help you with the skills you need to demonstrate competency for the unit *BSBWOR401A Establish effective workplace relationships*. This is one of the units that make up the Certificates in Business.

This manual is broken up into four distinct sections. They are:

1. **Collect, analyse and communicate information and ideas:** Here we will examine how you should seek and communicate information to others in your workplace.
2. **Develop trust and confidence:** Then we will examine the nature of trust and how you can use it to build your relationships with others in your workplace.
3. **Develop and maintain networks and relationships:** Next we will examine the nature of workplace networks and how you can use these to your advantage.
4. **Manage difficulties into positive outcomes:** Finally we will examine the nature of performance appraisals and conflict and how you can contribute to these by reviewing the performance of yourself and others.

At the conclusion of this training you will be asked to complete an assessment pack for this unit of competency. The information contained in this resource will assist you to complete this task.

On conclusion of this unit of competency you will have demonstrated your ability to collect, analyse and communicate information and to use that information to develop and maintain effective working relationships and networks, with particular regard to communication and representation.

SAMPLE

**BSBWOR401A/01**  
**Collect, Analyse and**  
**Communicate Information and**  
**Ideas**



**"...when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."**

**Sherlock Holmes [Sir Arthur Conan Doyle]**



**Collect relevant information from appropriate sources and analyse and share with the work team to improve work performance**

**Communicate ideas and information in a manner which is appropriate and sensitive to the cultural and social diversity of the audience and any specific needs**

**Implement consultation processes to encourage employees to contribute to issues related to their work, and promptly relay feedback to the work team in regard to outcomes**

**Seek and value contributions from internal and external sources in developing and refining new ideas and approaches**

**Implement processes to ensure that issues raised are resolved promptly or referred to relevant personnel as required**

**Information is the Lifblood of Any Working Relationship**

In this unit, we will be examining the processes involved with building strong working relationships. A crucial component of having a strong working relationship is building effective relationships with others in your workplace. In an effective working environment you achieve all the goals and objectives that you set. A key component of this is collecting and analysing information and ideas. As a manager this involves you in ensuring that you involve others in the work that is going on in your workplace. Having poor relationships with your workmates is going to make it extremely difficult to collect information that will allow you to collect the information you need to undertake your job effectively.

Within any organisation, information flows in many directions, and having an understanding of this flow is crucial to being able to survive in a modern organisation. There are three major information flows within any organisation. They illustrate the three key types of relationships that you are likely to have with other members of your staff.

Briefly these information flows are:

Information Flows in a Typical Organisation	
↓	<b>Top Down:</b> This type of information is disseminated to you from managers that are above you in the organisation. Often it will come in the form of orders or policy which you must implement. It also includes communication that you give to those who work underneath you.
↑	<b>Upward Communication:</b> This is a type of information that you will disseminate to those higher in the organisation than yourself. Often it will include progress reports and other reports that your manager has asked you to prepare for their consideration. It also includes any communication that you may receive from those beneath you in the organisational structure.
←	<b>Sideways Communication:</b> Here you will be communicating with staff that exist on the same level of the organisational structure as yourself. This type of communication travels within the same level.

As we previously mentioned, the flow of information within an organisation is influenced by the type of relationships that staff have with others in the organisation – you have to consider the types of relationships that you have with others and use the relationships that you have with staff at all levels of the organisation to improve your communication sources. We will examine sources of information shortly.

So, what benefits can effective communication and information sharing give to you and your organisation?

The Benefits of Effective Information and Communication	
<b>Information leads to new ideas</b>	As a manager good information and communication of that information is crucial to supporting ideas for change and innovation. It allows you to draw on a wide range of opinions and ideas. The wider the range, the more likely it is that you will find an effective means of improving your organisation.
<b>Information leads to good decision making</b>	Problem solving and decision making are two critical skills that you must possess as an effective manager. This process involves you in collecting information about the causes of the problem, attempting to generate several possible options for dealing with the problem, considering the consequences of each option and considering the resource implications of each idea. As you can see, in this process you must communicate with many individuals to obtain the information that you need to make an effective decision.

## Gathering Information

When you need to gather information for these sorts of things, it helps to think of the process as a series of steps.

The steps in the information gathering are:

### 1. Establish a Goal

The first stage of the process involves attempting to establish a purpose for the information gathering. That is asking yourself why? This goal is important because it allows you to ensure that you stay on track and do not gather information that is not relevant to the task at hand. The goal of the communication should be clearly communicated to all staff you involve in the process. If they know why you want to know something they are more likely to be forthcoming. Examples may include:

- Prepare a cost report for the new widget manufacturing process.
- Write a job description for Andy Smith.
- Conduct a satisfaction survey of all staff in the Accounting department.

When attempting to determine information requirements, you should look at the specifications that you are provided by your managers. These may come in many forms, the three most common forms are:

- **Specifications:** Generally these are the most formal type of information requirements. It will provide you with a brief that states exactly what information you are required to gather. Often specifications will also provide you with other information such as budgets, information sources, and your terms of reference. Specifications may also state to you how the information is to be presented at the conclusion of the project for interpretation by the managers involved.
- **Job Instructions:** Again, these are quite formal in their approach; however they generally will not be as strict as a set of specifications. They may allow you to approach a problem using your own knowledge and skills rather than telling you how to accomplish the task.
- **Consultation with End Users:** This final type is in many ways the most useful. It allows you to discuss exactly what the end user will require from the information. It will allow you to work towards finding the exact requirements and will enable the end product to meet their needs as well as is possible.

## 2. Determine Information Sources

When communicating, it is important that you have the right information. Information that you may gather can be of two major types: Secondary and Primary. Secondary is information gathered and recorded by others. Primary is information you gather and record yourself.

	Sources	Problems?
Secondary	Books, internet, reports, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and journals.	Information may be inaccurate, out of date, or biased.
Primary	Questionnaires, surveys, observation, experiments, historical information, and raw data.	Information must be gathered carefully to ensure it is accurate and bias free.

**Internal information sources** are any resources that you utilise from within your organisation. These may be personal sources (such as your own knowledge), interpersonal sources (relying on the expertise of others) or documented sources from the information systems within your organisation.

A company's internal accounting records, and control systems provide the most basic data on management inputs and the resulting outcomes. The principle advantages of this type of data are that the data is readily available, reasonably accessible on a continuous basis and that it is particularly relevant to the organisation's situation.

Data on the inputs to the management system can range from budgets and schedules to costing reports and materials planning information. Extensive data on outcomes can be obtained from billing records, shipment information, and other aspects of the accounting information system. The internal information from an organisation can be used for many reasons.

**External sources** are wide ranging, and include any information that does not come from official organisation sources. This may come from information providers such as the government, published data sources or from primary research conducted for the organisation by market research houses.

- **Published Data Sources:** These sources are by far the most popular source of external information. Not only is the data readily available, but often it is sufficient to answer a decision question. For example, a manager may be asked to determine whether the market for a given product exists. By consulting statistics available from various sources they may be able to answer this question. The major published sources are the various Government publications, periodicals and trade journals, industry associations, and other companies. Of all these sources, one of the most effective decision making tools comes from Census data - this is particularly true for marketing decisions.

- **Primary Research:** Primary research involves employing an organisation to conduct a research project on your behalf to gather the information you need. While this can pinpoint the exact piece of data you may need, it is a very costly expense. Often marketing decisions utilise this type of service, however there may also be a need for this type of research and data gathering for other reasons as well. The most important consideration is cost, and time. This type of data collection is expensive and time consuming, however given that it can provide you with tailor made information, you may find it useful for specific tasks.

### 3. Methods of collecting information

- Once you have determined the goals and sources of your information, you need to think about how you plan to go about collecting the information. There are a range of ways of gathering information – some of the most useful are:

Information Collection Methods	
<b>Ask Questions</b>	<p>One of the best ways of gaining information is to simply ask questions. While this may seem simple, it is important to remember that there are in fact a range of types of questions that you can ask. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed questions that require a yes or no answer;</li> <li>• Open questions that encourage comments;</li> <li>• Probing questions that attempt to get to the heart of the problem; and</li> <li>• Hypothetical questions which are 'what if' questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b>	<p>This is a skill in which most managers need practice and training. When gaining information through an interview it is important that you prepare well in advance – considering whom you will be interviewing, and how they are likely to feel. What will you ask? What types of question will you use? By using a range of different question types you put yourself in the best position to gain the right information.</p>
<b>Surveys</b>	<p>These tools are complicated to set up – and allow for bias if not correctly worded – however they are good tools for quickly gaining information and allowing for easy analysis of the information that you gain.</p>
<b>Meetings</b>	<p>This involves bringing together all those that will be able to provide you the information that you need in order to meet your objective. The group can provide you with what you need, discuss ideas and help you in identifying ideas and looking at each critically.</p>

## Brainstorming

This is an ideal way to get ideas from your work team. It is most often used during team meetings in order to allow everyone to have their say and to generate a wide range of ideas that will be used for further clarification of ideas. It is important that you allow ideas to flow without criticism of any kind (until the evaluation stage arrives). By doing this, people will be encouraged to contribute without having their ideas ridiculed. Often the craziest ideas are the best.

## Getting Everyone Involved - Consultation

Now that we understand why information is important and how you can go about gathering information – let's look at how you can get everyone involved in the process. This is often known as consultation. When working with your co-workers on gathering information be sure that you:

- **Involve your team in the gathering of information** — ask for their help in making sense of the information in front of you.
- **Share and explain the outcomes** — this will help your team reach a better understanding of the information gathered.
- **Involve the whole team** so that there is a shared understanding of the data and how it will affect the organisation and work team.

A '**consultative approach**' to working with your team involves you outlining the situation that you are trying to resolve, asking your team members for ideas, and deciding what to do based on the ideas provided. Such an approach is useful whenever a decision involving a number of people is involved. You may also find it useful when you don't have the experience or confidence in your skills to make a decision by yourself. By involving others you can ensure that all those people that have something to contribute have the opportunity to do so.



**Consulting with your staff can be a useful way of getting information.**

## Giving Information to Others

Up to this stage, we have concentrated on getting information from others in your organisation. However it is also likely that you will need to provide information to your team. There is a wide range of information that you may be asked to communicate. You may need to communicate a policy change, when your team are expected to work, performance appraisals, goals and objectives and a wide range of other types of information.

Communication is a process of trying to ensure that others understand exactly what your point of view is. It is a two way process that involves a message being sent by you and that message being received by another party. This should be straight forward, but between your message being sent and it being received is 'noise'. Noise is anything that can distort a communication and changes how the receiver perceives your message.

Modern workplaces are diverse. They include men and women, people of all ages, races, levels of experience, and levels of education, different mental or physical conditions. Each of these factors has a significant influence on how the receiver of a message perceives the message. Often you may find that an understanding cannot be reached immediately simply because your message was not received in a manner that you thought it would be. It may have been interpreted differently based on the age of the individual or because they do not understand English well.

There are a range of solutions to this problem. They include:

- **Using inclusive language:** Don't use sexist or racist language (or language that may be interpreted as being that way) as it can often cause the individual to interpret your message negatively.
- **Avoid jargon:** Using complicated language can make a message extremely difficult to understand for those who may have trouble communicating. Ensure that you present your message as simply as you can.
- **Get feedback:** Feedback is crucial. Ask questions such as "Do you understand?" as this can allow you to ensure that the receiver has correctly received your message, and thus ensure that your communication has been successful.

## Communication Processes and Methods

Communication should be a process in any workplace. By being a process, you can ensure that all your staff know how to communicate and ensure that communication takes place when it should. By having communication processes in place you can be sure that your staff know how they can raise any issues they may have with their work and you know that problems can be resolved quickly and is recorded for the future.

As a manager, it is important that you use a range of communication methods in your workplace. You may use email, written communication methods or oral communication. Let's now look at how you can select an appropriate communication method.

There is a real problem with written communication methods. When we talk to someone face-to-face, we know just who we are talking to. We automatically adjust our speech to be sure we are communicating our message. This is almost done instinctively. However many writers don't make those same adjustments when they write to different audiences, usually because they don't take the time to think about who will be reading what they write. To be sure that we communicate clearly in writing, we need to adjust our message - how we say and what information we include by recognising that different readers can best understand different messages.

## What is an Audience?

An audience is a group who receives particular information. You should anticipate the needs or expectations of your audience in order to convey information or argue for a particular claim. Your audience might be your manager, other co-workers, your clients or customers. You need to know your audience before you start communicating.

In order to determine your audience, there are a number of factors that you should take into consideration:

- **Who** they are (age, sex, education, economic status, political/social/religious beliefs);
- **What Level of Information** they have about the subject (novice, general reader, specialist or expert); and
- The **Context** in which they will be taking in the information (in a newspaper, as a letter, in a report, during a speech, on the Internet, and so forth).

Your audience's primary goal is to gain information from your communication. Think about writing a newsletter or a resume: audiences read these for information, only how they use the information varies. You will need to:

- Determine **who** the audience is.
- Think about **what** is an appropriate **format** to use.
- Consider **what is** and **is not** an **appropriate topic** for your audience. (If you don't have one already.)
- Determine **how** your topic will fit the format.

When we talk to someone face-to-face, we always know just who we're talking to. We automatically adjust our speech to be sure we communicate our message. For instance, when we talk to three-year olds, we shorten sentences and use simpler words. When we talk to a university professor, we use longer sentences and more formal language. In short, we change what we say because we know our *audience*.

## Audience Analysis

Analysing your audience is essential. You need to investigate exactly who will read or hear what you are going to communicate. For example, you might investigate who reads the journal articles or trade magazines in your field of study. Check out some of those magazines or journals and browse through several issues. In addition, you might interview people who will be your readers.

**Remember: Analyse your audience BEFORE you start writing, so you'll know what format, style, vocabulary, or level of information is expected.**

Once you know your audience, you are ready to begin. Knowing your audience enables you to select or reject details for that specific audience. In addition, different audiences expect different types of formats for texts. Readers of Environmental Impact Statements don't want to read rhyming poetry. Mothers getting letters from children don't want to read a report about the events of the past month.

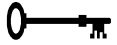




**Activity Two**

You have been asked to write a response to a letter of complaint. How do you think the audience will affect the way in which you write this letter?

A series of horizontal lines for writing, with a large, light grey 'SAMPLE' watermark diagonally across the page.



### Key Points Section 1

- Information is a crucial factor in any business decision. When providing any form of information for use in making management decisions, it is important to determine the information requirements.
- The key information requirements that you should look for when gathering your information are:
  - Information purpose;
  - Scope;
  - Form;
  - Presentation; and
  - Resources available.
- Information for management decision making can come from two different sources:
  - External information sources come from outside of the immediate organisation; and
  - Internal information sources come from within the organisation.

SAMPLE



## Section 1 - 'True' or 'False' Quiz



<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	In an effective working environment you achieve all the goals and objectives that you set.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	The flow of information within an organisation is influenced by the type of relationships that staff have with others in the organisation.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	Information only flows up and down an organisational structure.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	When attempting to determine information requirements, you should look at the specifications that you are provided by your managers.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	Information does not improve decision making.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	The goal of the communication should be clearly communicated to all staff you involve in any process.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	Your audience will not influence your communication.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	Secondary information is gathered and recorded by yourself.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	A 'consultative approach' to working with your team involves you outlining the situation that you are trying to resolve, asking your team members for ideas, and deciding what to do based on the ideas provided.
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<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	Questionnaires are an example of secondary information.
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