RIICOM201E
Communication in the Workplace

Learner Guide Instructions

Who is this document for?
The learner.

What is in this document?

- Course information that matches the PowerPoint presentation.
- Review questions.
- Practical assessment instructions for learners.

What do you need to do before you use it for the first time?

1. Rebrand the document.
2. Review the document as part of your validation process.
3. Set the reading and test time limits that are highlighted in pink at the end of the document.

See the 'Read Me First' document for a complete set of instructions on how to use these resources.

LEARNER GUIDE

RIICOM201E Communication in the Workplace

Learner Name:	
Learner ID:	
Learner Contact Number:	
Learner Email Address:	
Date Training Commenced:	

This Book Contains:

☐ Course Information.

☐ Review Questions.

☐ Practical Assessment overview and instructions.

Table of Contents

1.1 Introduction

This course is based on the unit of competency **RIICOM201E Communicate in the Workplace.**

In this training course you will learn about:

- ◆ Communication equipment and systems.

- ◆ Face-to-face communication.

- ◆ Written communication (documentation).

1.1.1 Workplace Communication

Good communication is one of the most important things to help make sure any workplace is running properly.

This includes all written and spoken communication.

Everything you read, write and talk about with other personnel is contributing to effective communication.

It is important that all communications that happen at work are clear, to the point, easily understood and meet the requirements of site rules, policies and procedures.

1.1.2 Working Safely

You must follow all safety rules and instructions when performing any work. If you are not sure about what you should do, ask your boss or supervisor. They will tell you what you need to do and how to do it in a safe way.

1.1.2.1 Health & Safety Rules

Every workplace has to follow laws and rules to keep everyone safe. There are 4 main types:

Acts	These are laws that you have to follow.
Regulations	These explain what the law means.
Codes of Practice	These are instructions on how to follow the law, based on industry standards.
Australian Standards	These tell you what the minimum requirement is for a job, product or hazard.

Some states use OHS laws, and other states use WHS laws. They both talk about the same thing, but use different words or names for people. If you have any questions about safety rules you should talk to your boss or supervisor.

1.1.2.2 Operations Documentation

Before starting your work you need to make sure you have access to all operations documentation for the job. This will help you to do your work in the safest way and make sure all work is compliant.

Operations documentation includes:

Document Type	Explanation
Site Details	The information and safety requirements of the workplace environment (where you will be working).
Hazard Details	Any hazards in the work area or related to the work. This could also include instructions on how to handle dangerous or hazardous materials.
Task Details	Instructions of what the work is or what you will be doing. Also instructions on how to safely do the job.
Faulty Equipment Procedures	Isolation procedures to follow or forms to fill out.
Signage	Site signage tells you what equipment you need to have, or areas that are not safe to be in.
Emergency Procedures	Instructions on what to do in emergency situations, for example if there is fire, accident or emergency where evacuation or first aid is needed.
Equipment and Work Instructions	Details of how to operate plant and equipment and the sequence of work to be done.
Communications Instructions/ Requirements	Details of communications that need to be maintained during work activities such as: ◆ Reporting (spoken and written) progress, issues, incidents, faults and other relevant information. ◆ Giving, receiving and confirming instructions. ◆ Filling out forms. ◆ Warning other workers about hazards or dangers. ◆ Signing off on permits or work instructions.

1.1.2.3 Emergency Procedures

Each workplace will have communications safety procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency.

Emergency communication procedures may include:

◆ Written emergency procedures and policies.

◆ The reporting of incidents or emergencies to relevant personnel.

◆ Warning procedures including sirens and announcements.

◆ Maintaining communication and keeping people up-to-date.

◆ Communicating with emergency services (e.g. fire service).

◆ Communicating with other relevant agencies (e.g. electrical power service).

◆ Writing of reports and records.

It is essential that you are aware of the safety procedures to be used on your workplace in relation to communications.

If you are unsure of the procedures for your workplace, or do not know where to locate the information for these procedures, speak with a supervisor or other experienced personnel.

Review Questions

1.	What information could you access to make sure your work is compliant?	☐

2.	List 3 examples of operations documentation.	☐

1.

2.

3.

3.	What kinds of communication requirements are generally outlined in your operations documentation?	☐

4.	List 3 examples of emergency communication procedures you should locate before you start work.	☐

1.

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3.

1.2 Choose the Right Way to Communicate

The way you communicate with others will depend on the requirements of the job or task, standard procedure and the availability of communication equipment.

Communication methods may include:

- Talking via radios or telephone.

- Signalling using sound with bells, whistles and sirens.

- Signalling using lights, flags and signs.

- Electronic communication via a computer, tablet and smartphone (e.g. sending and receiving emails, SMS or video calls).

- Written communication (e.g. documents, reports, forms, notes, letters, memos and other paperwork).

- Face-to-face conversations and discussions (verbal communication).

Using the right communication method helps to make sure that the information is passed on quickly and accurately.

To establish and maintain effective communication with other personnel make sure you:

- Use communication equipment properly.

- Fill out forms or reports properly, in handwriting that is easy to read, or use a computer to fill them in electronically.

- Speak clearly and use plain English.

- Check that the person you are communicating with understands what you are saying and has received the message in full. You can ask them questions or let them ask you questions to confirm that they understand what you are trying to communicate. You can also get them to explain it back to you in their own words.

1.2.1 Communication Breakdown

There may be times when communications are not clear. This can be caused by a number of reasons. Sometimes it can be difficult to get your message across because of:

- Misunderstanding caused by unfamiliar or technical language.

- Misunderstanding caused by misinformation or inaccurate information.

- Low language or literacy skills.

- Background noise that makes it hard to hear what people are saying, especially when talking on the phone or over two-way radio.

- Damaged or faulty communication equipment.

- The way you are trying to communicate. If you are not using the right or expected methods of communication it can cause confusion. An example of this is verbally passing on a message when you are supposed to complete and hand in a form or report instead.

Try to avoid these things to keep communications in the workplace clear.

Review Questions

5.	List 3 examples of operations documentation.	☐
1.		
2.		
3.		

6.	How can you make sure you are establishing and maintaining clear communication with other personnel?	☐

| |

7.	List 3 examples of causes of communication breakdown.	☐

1.

2.

3.

2.1 Communication Systems and Equipment

There is a range of communication systems and equipment that is used in various workplaces.

It is important that you identify the systems and equipment being used at your workplace so that you can make sure you are communicating with others in the right, and expected way.
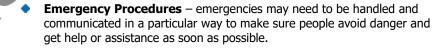
2.1.1 Communication Systems

Communication systems can be made up of a range of parts including:

- **The Systems Overview** – what equipment is available and how communications need to be maintained during different types of work.

- **Operating Directories** – details of all personnel and communications in use across a work site.

- **Communication Equipment** – phones, radios, computers, pagers, lights, bells, buzzers, whistles or any other equipment that is used to communicate with other workers across a range of activities.

- **Site Specific Procedures** including:
  - Call signs – names used to identify different people, equipment and parts of a project or site.
  - Area descriptions.
  - Voice procedure – the way you need to speak when using equipment to make sure others can understand you and know when you have finished speaking.
  - Protocols – rules or standard practices relating to communication equipment and systems.

- **Emergency Procedures** – emergencies may need to be handled and communicated in a particular way to make sure people avoid danger and get help or assistance as soon as possible.

2.1.2 Communication Equipment

Communication equipment used in a workplace may include:

- ◆ Radio (e.g. fixed frequency two-way radio).

- ◆ Telephone.

- ◆ Computer.

- ◆ Audible signals such as bells, whistles and sirens.

- ◆ Physical signals such as lamps, lights and flags.

- ◆ Hand signals.

- ◆ Written documentation (pens, forms, documents, reports).

Two-way radios are useful, especially on big work sites, but you should use fixed channel or trunked radios if you are communicating with just one person during a job. This will stop any interference on the channel and make sure you don't pass messages, directions or instructions to the wrong person.

Audible signals are useful for giving directions where you do not have constant line of sight with the person you are communicating with.

Using visual signals like lights, flags or hand signals to direct, or receive directions from another worker is only appropriate where the person you are communicating with can see you at all times, but may not necessarily be able to hear you because of background noise or the distance between you.

Review Questions

1.	List 3 examples of components or parts that can make up a communications system.	☐

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2.

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| **2.** | List 3 examples of communication equipment. | ☐ |

1.

2.

3.

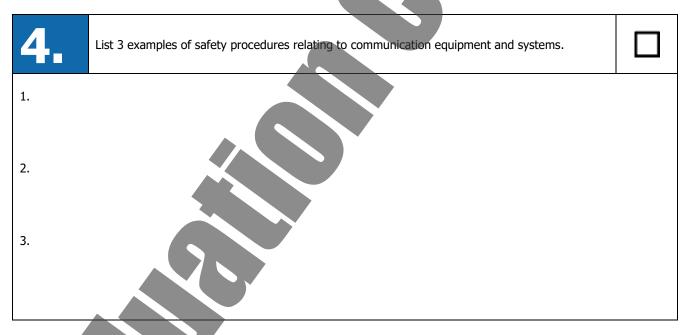| **3.** | When can you use visual signals to communicate with other workers? | ☐ |

2.2 Equipment Safety Procedures

Safety procedures that relate to communication systems and equipment focus on the correct use of equipment and systems in each situation. This focus aims to avoid incidents caused by poor communication, misunderstandings or using the equipment incorrectly.

Safety procedures for communication equipment and systems includes:

- **Equipment maintenance** – guidelines on keeping communication equipment operating properly.

- **Equipment use** – rules around how, when and where you can use equipment.

- **Guidelines or instructions around communication equipment that is not allowed to be used.** In some cases you may not be allowed to use mobile phones on work sites or in certain areas.

- **Fault reports** – to warn other personnel of dangerous or faulty equipment.

- **Hazard reports and risk assessments** – identified unsafe situations need to be documented and managed in the right way to keep everybody safe.

Check with your supervisor or other authorised and experienced personnel to see if there are any safety requirements for any communication equipment you need to use.

Review Questions

4.	List 3 examples of safety procedures relating to communication equipment and systems.	☐

1.

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3.

2.3 Use Communication Equipment and Systems

Before you use any communication equipment make sure:

- You are using the right method of communication for the situation.

- The equipment is in good condition and works properly.

- You know how to operate it properly.

- Other workers you are communicating with know what you are doing and what equipment you are using.

- Other workers will be able to understand what you are telling them with the communication equipment.

- The equipment will not cause any hazards, incidents or unsafe situations for yourself and other personnel in the area.

Operate all equipment in line with workplace rules, policies, procedures and instructions. For example, you may need to use specific call signs and voice procedures, or include specific details in written documents and emails.

Communicate clearly and give direct and prompt directions or responses to other personnel while you work. This will keep everything running smoothly and make sure everybody understands what is going on.

If an unexpected situation occurs that is caused by the way you are operating the communication equipment you should stop and assess the situation. Talk to other personnel and work out how you will communicate and what equipment you will use for the remainder of the work.