

Develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders

WM40 - SQA Unit Code H2L0 04

This national occupational standard D2 belongs to the MSC – the standards setting body for management and leadership

Area of competence

This unit is about developing productive working relationships with colleagues, within your own organisation and within other organisations with which your organisation works, and with identified stakeholders. It involves being aware of the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of colleagues and stakeholders and working with and supporting them in various ways. The need to monitor and review the effectiveness of working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders is also a key requirement of this unit. 'Colleagues' are any people you are expected to work with, whether they are at a similar position or in other positions in terms of level of responsibility, including your manager.

For the purposes of this unit, 'stakeholder' refers to individuals or organisations that have a material, legal or political interest in or who may be affected by the activities and performance of your organisation.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for middle managers and senior managers.

Links to other units

This unit is closely linked to units **A3. Develop your personal networks**, **B2. Map the environment in which your organisation operates**, **D1. Develop productive working relationships with colleagues**, **D6. Allocate and monitor the progress and quality of work in your area of responsibility** and **E14. Support team and virtual working** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

Skills

Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in developing productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Balancing competing needs and interest
- Communicating
- Consulting
- Empathising
- Information management
- Leadership
- Managing conflict
- Monitoring
- Networking
- Obtaining feedback
- Presenting information
- Prioritising
- Providing feedback
- Problem-solving

- Reviewing
- Valuing and supporting others

Outcomes of effective performance

You must be able to do the following:

1. Identify stakeholders and the background to and nature of their interest in the activities and performance of the organisation.
2. Establish working relationships with relevant colleagues and stakeholders.
3. Recognise and respect the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of colleagues and stakeholders and, particularly in situations of matrix management, their managers' requirements.
4. Create an environment of trust and mutual respect where you have no authority, or shared authority, over those you are working with.
5. Understand difficult situations and issues from your colleague's perspective and provide support, where necessary, to move things forward.
6. Provide colleagues and stakeholders with appropriate information to enable them to perform effectively.
7. Consult colleagues and stakeholders in relation to key decisions and activities and take account of their views, including their priorities, expectations and attitudes to potential risks.
8. Fulfil agreements made with colleagues and stakeholders and let them know.
9. Advise colleagues and stakeholders promptly of any difficulties or where it will be impossible to fulfil agreements.
10. Identify and sort out conflicts of interest and disagreements with colleagues and stakeholders in ways that minimise damage to work and activities and to the individuals and organisations involved.
11. Monitor and review the effectiveness of working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders, seeking and providing feedback, in order to identify areas for improvement.
12. Monitor wider developments in order to identify issues of potential interest or concern to stakeholders in the future and to identify new stakeholders.

Behaviours which underpin effective performance

13. You present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding.
14. You show respect for the views and actions of others.
15. You seek to understand people's needs and motivations.
16. You comply with and ensure others comply with legal requirements, industry regulations, organisational policies and professional codes.
17. You create a sense of common purpose.
18. You work towards win-win solutions.
19. You show sensitivity to internal and external politics that impact on your area of work.
20. You keep promises and honour commitments.
21. You consider the impact of your own actions on others.
22. You use communication styles that are appropriate to different people and situations.
23. You work to develop an atmosphere of professionalism and mutual support.

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

- a. The benefits of developing productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- b. Different types of stakeholder and key principles which underpin the 'stakeholder' concept.
- c. How to identify your organisation's stakeholders, including background information and the nature of their interest in your organisation.
- d. Principles of effective communication and how to apply them in order to communicate effectively with colleagues and stakeholders.
- e. Why it is important to recognise and respect the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of colleagues and stakeholders.
- f. The importance of creating an environment of trust and mutual respect where you have no authority, or shared authority, over those you are working with.
- g. The importance of understanding difficult situations and issues from your colleague's perspective and providing support, where necessary, to move things forward.
- h. How to identify and meet the information needs of colleagues and stakeholders.
- i. What information it is appropriate to provide to colleagues and stakeholders and the factors that need to be taken into consideration.
- j. How to consult with colleagues and stakeholders in relation to key decisions and activities.
- k. The importance of taking account, and being seen to take account, of the views of colleagues and stakeholders, particularly in relation to their priorities, expectations and attitudes to potential risks.
- l. Why communication with colleagues and stakeholders on fulfilment of agreements or any problems affecting or preventing fulfilment is important.
- m. How to identify conflicts of interest with colleagues and stakeholders and the techniques that can be used to manage or remove them.
- n. How to identify disagreements with colleagues and stakeholders and the techniques for sorting them out.
- o. The damage that conflicts of interest and disagreements with colleagues and stakeholders can cause to individuals and organisations.
- p. How to take account of diversity and inclusion issues when developing working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- q. How to recognise and take account of political issues when dealing with colleagues and stakeholders.
- r. How to manage the expectations of colleagues and stakeholders.
- s. How to monitor and review the effectiveness of working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- t. How to get and make effective use of feedback on the effectiveness of working relationships from colleagues and stakeholders.
- u. How to provide colleagues and stakeholders with useful feedback on the effectiveness of working relationships.
- v. The importance of monitoring wider developments in relation to stakeholders and how to do so effectively.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

- w. Current and emerging political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal developments in the industry or sector.
- x. Sector-specific legislation, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice.



- y. Standards of behaviour and performance in the industry or sector.
- z. The culture of the industry or sector.
- aa. Developments, issues and concerns of importance to stakeholders in the industry or sector.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

- bb. The vision, values, objectives, plans, structure and culture of your organisation.
- cc. Relevant colleagues, their work roles and responsibilities.
- dd. Identified stakeholders, their background and interest in the activities and performance of the organisation.
- ee. Agreements with colleagues and stakeholders.
- ff. The identified information needs of colleagues and stakeholders.
- gg. Mechanisms for consulting with colleagues and stakeholders on key decisions and activities.
- hh. The organisation's planning and decision-making processes.
- ii. Mechanisms for communicating with colleagues and stakeholders.
- jj. Power, influence and politics within the organisation.
- kk. Standards of behaviour and performance that are expected in the organisation.
- ll. Mechanisms in place for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.