

93.9% of students agreed that speaking and listening skills were important skills to have

82.4% of students believed they were better communicators after they had participated in Words for Work

73.8% of volunteers believed that students thought about their future careers more as a result of their participation

Benefits of Words for Work

For schools

“The achievements of students on our pilot Words for Work project in terms of self-esteem, confidence and most of all their growth in emotional understanding of each other to facilitate communication amongst themselves and the business volunteers was quite extraordinary... The young people saw the relevance of literacy in the real sense, and can now start to apply this within the school curriculum.”

- Clive, Teacher, Birmingham

- Change in attitude towards communication skills and their impact for learning and employability
- Students who are better able to communicate and therefore better able to learn and engage fully in school life
- Positive relationship building with local businesses

For students

“I’ve learnt how to communicate easier with different people – like people I wouldn’t normally talk to. I’m not afraid anymore, like when I’m in class to stick up my hand and answer questions. I’m not afraid anymore of being wrong.”

- Charlie, Student, Stoke-on-Trent

- Change in attitude towards speaking and listening skills and their ability to use them effectively
- Improved confidence and skills leading to raised aspirations for their career choices and greater motivation to succeed in education and training.
- Entering the workforce as good communicators and effective employees

For businesses

“It’s a win for employers and a win for students. From our point of view helping children to have the best chance of getting a job is good for the local economy.”

- Douglas Spinks, Deputy Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council, Volunteer, Woking

- Enabling employees to improve their professional development and sense of satisfaction in the workplace
- Nurturing and enabling the future workforce
- Building long-term links with local schools and the community

Delivering the project

You need to assign staff to two key roles and consider the time commitment and workshop schedule

Words for Work leader

A Senior Leader to communicate regularly with the hub, disseminate information about Words for Work to the wider school, including SMT.

Words for Work delivery teacher/s

A committed member of staff to:

- Engage with the Words for Work resource to support delivery of the project, including arranging facilities, resources and planning a celebration event.
- Deliver Words for Work to your students
- Engage with evaluation tools.

Time commitment

Workshop delivery: up to 24 hours

Set-up: 4 hours

Workshop preparation: 6 hours

Evaluation: 3 hours

Celebration event including set up: 3 hours

Workshop schedule

Aim	Method	Learning outcomes
Phase 1 – 4 x 3 hour workshops delivered by teaching staff to year 9/10 pupils. Can be focussed on a targeted group or delivered to a whole year group.		
Work shop 1 Introduction What is communication? Why is it important? Distinguish between verbal and non-verbal	1. Brainstorm 2. Games 3. Discussion	1. Students find out what communication is and why it is important 2. Students distinguish between verbal and non-verbal communication
Workshop 2 Verbal and non-verbal communication in action. When do you use them? Do they help each other?	1. Brainstorm and discussion 2. Drama activities 3. Word bank activity: praise sandwich	1. Students look at verbal and non-verbal communication in more detail using drama games 2. Students investigate the importance of effective communication 3. Students start a bank of words and phrases that are useful tools for verbal communication
Workshop 3 The power of communication	1. Brainstorm key elements to a campaign 2. Model an ad campaign 3. Activity: groups devise and shoot a campaign for their peers	1. Students learn how visual communication can be used to inform and persuade 2. Students plan and execute a simple photo campaign 3. Students work effectively in a team
Workshop 4 Communicating for a purpose Preparing to meet the business volunteers	1. Brainstorm and discussion 2. Prepare a presentation to give to volunteers 3. Prepare a list of questions to ask them	1. Students prepare and practise a formal presentation 2. Students think about communication at work and what they would like to find out from the business volunteers 3. Students prepare to meet the business volunteers
Phase 2 – 6 x 2 hour workshops delivered by teaching staff and attended by business volunteers. This stage is delivered to a smaller group of students with a ratio of 2 business volunteers to 5 students.		
Workshop 5 Getting to know you Investigating presentation skills	1. Students and volunteers ask each other pre-prepared questions 2. Students give presentations and evaluate performance against a checklist 3. Compile a list of top tips for making good presentations	1. Students find out about presentation skills through evaluating their own performance against a checklist of criteria 2. Students find out about the business people and their everyday lives at work through asking questions

Workshop 6 Investigating interview skills	1. Speed interview activity where the volunteers share knowledge and experience through students observing their interview techniques 2. Plan and make a poster that shows good and bad interview skills	1. Students find out about interview skills through interviewing the volunteers and discussing techniques with them 2. Students consolidate their knowledge of interview skills and techniques through making a poster 3. Students work in a team with the business volunteers
Workshop 7 Investigating teamwork skills Planning	1. Volunteers share their knowledge and experience 2. Make a list of skills which can be written on to flags 3. Use pro-forma to plan how they will fulfil the brief – to design a creative product to advertise good communication skills in the workplace	1. Students identify key communication skills 2. Students engage in the process of detailed planning, flagging the skills they use to do this 3. Students experience working in a team effectively
Workshops 8 and 9 Skills in action	1. Follow agreed plan to design and create product	1. Work as a team and develop these skills to increase effectiveness 2. Flag up communication skills being used by other team members
Workshop 10 Reflecting on communication	1. Review what they have done 2. Draw a visual representation of their journey and discuss what has been learned using questions as prompts 3. Prepare for the showcase event	1. Review the Words for Work journey 2. Reflect on what has been learned.

Celebration event

The celebration event provides pupils with the opportunity to showcase their improved communication skills. Throughout the project, it acts as a focus for pupils. Attendance at the celebration event is important. It will enable you all to celebrate what you have achieved, and to say goodbye.



"The Words for Work project has greatly enhanced the curriculum provision in Year 9. We have seen motivated, enthused and happy students whose communication skills have significantly improved."

Stuart Shepherd. Headteacher. Bishop David Brown school