



# A 360° View of Communicative Competence at Work

Competency Framework for Intercultural Communication in the Workplace

With increasingly diverse and globally oriented workplaces, the Government of Ontario's strategy targets success in integrating skilled immigrants, leveraging their skills and global connections.

Working closely with the newcomer, employer and service provider communities, Touchstone Institute developed a tool to support this initiative.

The Communicative Competence at Work Framework describes standards by which New Canadians and employers can implement and evaluate communication competencies that support diversity and inclusion. It also serves as a frame of reference and a common language for educators, trainers and service providers in the development of program curricula and professional development goals.



## Make communication work for you and your workplace

Explore the Framework at:  
[360communication.ca](http://360communication.ca)



A practical set of strategies, approaches, and language to help organizations and individuals, employers and employees leverage workspace diversity and create an inclusive environment.

A Project Developed By:

**TOUGHSTONE**  
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COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS

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# The Framework: Communicative Competence at Work

Communicating competently with individuals and groups in a multicultural workplace may not come as naturally as it does in one's preferred or most familiar settings. It does not come easily until the communicator has developed cultural awareness, gained understanding, and mastered some key intercultural communication competencies.

Because the context and purpose of communication are critical, this framework is organized around three types of interactions, which we call our **three broad domains**:

- 1 **Connect with Others**
- 2 **Work with Others**
- 3 **Work within an Organization**

For each of the domains, areas of awareness and knowledge that facilitate communication are listed. These are followed by an objective and a competency definition.

To learn more about strategies, approaches, and areas for language development visit the interactive online Framework at:

Awareness and Knowledge

## Connect with Others

### Recognize that:

- culture shapes thoughts, feelings and reactions
- culture forms and affects ways of communicating
- culture influences personal identity
- cultural biases and assumptions affect communication
- values and beliefs differ across cultures

### Learn more about the:

- differences in accepted ways of communicating across cultures
- effects of language usage on communication
- effects of nonverbal communication on social and business relationships
- different modes of communication for different situations
- benefits of managing reactions and emotions in professional communication

Objective	Use respectful and inclusive communication	Establish shared meanings with people	Foster social and professional relationships
Competency	Be able to communicate with a variety of people from different backgrounds in a way that makes them feel valued and respected	Be able to communicate with a variety of people from different backgrounds to ensure that the messages conveyed are mutually understood	Be able to build and maintain rapport, trust, and ethical workplace relationships with a variety of people from different backgrounds

## Work with Others

### Recognize that:

- group or team communication practices may differ across cultures
- communication practices affect collaboration and consensus building
- tolerance of ambiguity affects working with others
- nonverbal communication impacts workplace discussions
- ways of thinking impact communication

### Learn more about the:

- different levels of formality that apply within particular contexts
- impact of hierarchical orientations on workplace communication
- impact of jargon and idiomatic language on the clarity and formality of communication
- different expectations in high and low context ways of communicating
- expectations of teamwork in own workplace

Adapt communication to different people and situations	Participate in decision making and problem solving	Use communication that contributes to teamwork
Be able to communicate in a flexible way by changing tone, register and delivery to meet the needs of people from different backgrounds as well as different contexts and situations	Be able to share and receive ideas and information as required to facilitate decisions and solutions in workplace settings	Be able to give and receive information and feedback in a way that supports and contributes to the work of a team

## Work within an Organization

### Recognize that:

- culture shapes thoughts, feelings and notions of hierarchy may differ across cultures
- culture may impact understanding of roles and responsibilities
- cultural diversity plays a role in conflict resolution
- culture influences critical thinking, problem solving and decision making
- different ways of communicating may lead to misunderstandings

### Learn more about the:

- organization's ethics, values, standards and workplace culture
- organization's structure, hierarchy, and reporting relationships
- expectations of own role and how it contributes to the organization's objectives
- intersection of own role with others within the organizational hierarchy
- organization's expectations associated with the use of communication technologies

Align communication with workplace role	Use and produce documents and resources	Address conflicts and other challenges
Be able to communicate in a way that represents the organization and own role within it	Be able to comprehend and produce documents in a variety of formats and genres to meet communication needs	Be able to identify and address actual and potential workplace conflicts in an impartial and professional manner