

Communication & Feedback workshop

Methodology toolkit
for youth workers by



Workshop overview

Basic Information

Title: Communication & Feedback Workshop (NVC)

Duration: ~3–4 hours

Group size: 10–30 participants

Target group: Youth (16–30)

Facilitator(s): 1-2 people

Learning objectives

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Understand the basics of Nonviolent Communication (NVC)
- Recognize the difference between constructive feedback and criticism
- Identify their own emotions and underlying needs in communication
- Distinguish between observation and assumption
- Practice giving feedback in a clear, respectful, and structured way
- Develop skills for receiving feedback without defensiveness
- Improve empathy and understanding in interpersonal communication

Materials Needed

- Printed Cards of Feelings
- Printed Cards of Needs
- Printed examples of behavior (feedback vs criticism scenarios)
- Flipcharts / whiteboard
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Space for movement activities
- Timer (optional)

Useful Resources

- [Communication workshop materials](#)
- Photos and outputs from previous workshops

Workshop flow

1. Introduction

5 minutes

The workshop begins with a brief welcome, introduction of facilitators, and an explanation of the purpose of the session. Participants are introduced to the main focus of the workshop, which is improving communication through understanding emotions, needs, and the difference between feedback and criticism.

They are guided through what to expect, how the workshop will be structured, and what the main goals are. It is also important to establish a few simple agreements, such as respect, openness, and creating a safe space for sharing. This part sets the tone for the entire workshop and helps participants feel comfortable and ready to engage.

2. Icebreaker: Communication Without Words

25 minutes

This part is an experiential activity focused on connection and awareness of communication beyond words.

Participants move freely around the space and gradually explore different aspects of connection. The facilitator guides them step by step through the process – starting with simple movement, then focusing on breathing, body awareness, and connection to the space. Participants are encouraged to walk in their own style and pace, and later to consciously connect with others through eye contact.

As the activity develops, participants are invited to adjust their movement and facial expressions to reflect how they actually feel in the moment. This creates a deeper awareness of how emotions are communicated nonverbally.

After the movement part, the focus shifts to emotions. Participants are asked how they feel right now and are supported by NVC feeling cards. They then move into pairs, where they share their feelings with someone they feel comfortable with. They can speak in any language, and moments of silence are completely acceptable.

At the end, a few participants share their experience in the whole group. The goal of this section is to help participants realize that communication is happening all the time, even when we are not speaking, and to connect communication with emotions.

3. Introduction to NVC

(5 min)

The facilitator introduces Nonviolent Communication (NVC) as an approach that helps people understand each other and communicate more clearly.

Participants learn that emotions are connected to needs – when needs are satisfied, we experience pleasant emotions, and when they are not, we experience tension or discomfort. The facilitator can support this explanation with examples using feelings and needs cards or a short personal story.

This part provides a simple conceptual foundation for the rest of the workshop.

4. Purpose of Communication & Subjective Reality

(5 min)

Participants are invited to reflect on why communication is important and why it is often difficult to understand each other.

The facilitator introduces the idea of subjective reality – that each person perceives the world differently. This is supported by a short presentation or printed images that can be interpreted in multiple ways. Participants share what they see, and differences in perception naturally emerge.

This short activity shows that misunderstandings often come from different interpretations rather than bad intentions.

5. Feedback, Criticism & Reflection

(15–20 min)

Participants work in small groups (4–5 people) with printed examples of different communication styles and statements.

First, they go through the materials together and discuss whether the statements represent constructive feedback or unconstructive criticism. They focus on how the message is formulated, what it targets (behavior vs person), and what its intention is.

After this, the activity naturally shifts toward understanding reflection.

Participants explore how feedback differs from reflection – while feedback comes from others and provides information about how behavior affects them, reflection is a personal process of looking back, making sense of an experience, and learning from it.

The facilitator supports the discussion by highlighting key distinctions: constructive feedback focuses on behavior and its impact, aims to support development, and is open to dialogue. Criticism, on the other hand, often expresses frustration and targets the person rather than the situation. Reflection is then introduced as an internal process that helps individuals learn from their own experience.

This part helps participants understand how different forms of communication influence relationships and learning, and when it is appropriate to use feedback, criticism, or reflection.

6. Observation vs Assumption

(15 min)

Participants start with a short silent activity where they are asked to observe without speaking for a few minutes. After that, they share what they noticed.

The facilitator then explains the difference between observation and assumption, often writing examples on a flipchart.

Participants learn to distinguish between facts (what actually happened) and interpretations (what we think it means). This skill is essential for giving constructive feedback.

7. Model Scene: Feedback vs Criticism

(20 min)

Facilitators perform a short role-play based on a common situation (e.g. someone coming late to a meeting).

The same situation is presented twice:

- first as unconstructive criticism
- then as constructive feedback using NVC principles

Participants observe both versions and reflect on the differences. Together with the facilitator, they identify what makes feedback constructive and what makes criticism ineffective.

This part makes the concept very concrete and easy to understand.

8. How to Give and Receive Feedback

(20 min)

The facilitator introduces a simple structure for giving constructive feedback based on NVC: Observation → Feelings → Needs → Request

Participants learn how to clearly describe a situation, express their emotions, connect them to needs, and formulate a request. The facilitator may also explain additional steps such as invitation, common understanding, and next steps.

At the same time, participants are guided on how to receive feedback:

- ask clarifying questions
- avoid defensive reactions
- acknowledge the feedback
- decide what to do with it

This part gives participants a practical framework they can apply in real situations.

9. Feedback Practice in Model Situations

(20–30 min)

Participants practice giving and receiving feedback in simulated situations. They work with prepared examples of behavior (e.g. cards or roles) and apply the NVC structure in practice. This allows them to experience both sides of communication – giving and receiving feedback.

The facilitator moves between groups, supports participants, and helps them stay within the structure.

This is one of the most important parts of the workshop, where learning turns into real skill.

10. Final Reflection

(15 min)

Participants reflect on their experience and learning.

They answer questions such as:

- How do you feel?
- What have we done?
- What are you taking away from this session?

First, they write their answers individually on sticky notes. Then they share in pairs, followed by a few voluntary shares in the whole group. The notes are placed on a flipchart.

This helps participants consolidate their learning and connect it to real-life situations.

11. Closing

(10 min)

The workshop ends with a short closing and appreciation of participants.

Facilitators thank the group for their openness and participation and briefly summarize the key message of the workshop. The session is closed in a simple and positive way.