

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about developing your personal networks to support both your current and future work.

Your personal networks may include people in your own organisation, people you meet from other organisations and people you are in contact with over the phone or the internet.

Developing personal networks is based on the principles of reciprocity (exchanging things with others for mutual benefit) and confidentiality. People only want to network if there are mutual benefits from exchanging information and other resources. There must also be clearly agreed boundaries of confidentiality – certain information and resources may not be exchanged because they are confidential.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for middle managers and senior managers.

Links with other units

This unit is linked to units **A2 Manage your own resources and professional development** and **D2 Develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for management and leadership.

If your organisation is a small firm, you should look at unit *A3 Check your own skills* which has been developed by the Small Firms Enterprise and Development Initiative (SFEDI) specifically for small firms and which **may** be more suitable to your needs. You can obtain information on the unit from SFEDI on tel 0114 241 2155 or at the SFEDI website (www.sfedi.co.uk).

Skills

Listed below are the main generic skills which need to be applied in developing your personal networks. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information.

- Communicating
- Setting objectives
- Questioning
- Time management
- Information management
- Presenting information
- Influencing and persuading
- Reflecting
- Learning
- Evaluating
- Risk management

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

- 1 Develop and maintain personal networks of contacts, which are appropriate to meet your current and future needs for information and resources.
- 2 Ensure that key members of your personal networks have an accurate idea of your knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and experience and are aware of the benefits of networking with you.
- 3 Establish boundaries of confidentiality between yourself and members of your personal networks and where appropriate, develop guidelines for exchanging information and resources.
- 4 Develop your personal networks to reflect your changing interests and needs.
- 5 Make active use of the information and resources gained through your personal networks.
- 6 Introduce people and organisations with common interests to each other.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

- 1 You acknowledge when your own interests are in conflict with common goals.
- 2 You state your own position and views clearly and confidently in conflict situations.
- 3 You encourage others to share information and knowledge within the constraints of confidentiality.
- 4 You identify and work with people and organisations that can provide support for your work.
- 5 You work to develop an atmosphere of professionalism and mutual support.
- 6 You clarify your own and other's expectations of relationships.
- 7 You model behaviour that shows respect, helpfulness and co-operation.
- 8 You keep promises and honour commitments.
- 9 You consider the impact of your own actions on others.
- 10 You reflect regularly on your own experiences and use these to inform future actions

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

- 1 The benefits for individuals and organisations of networking.
- 2 Principles of effective communication and how to apply them in developing personal networks.
- 3 The range of different types of questions, and how and when to use them.
- 4 The range of different communication styles and how people prefer to communicate.
- 5 The range of methods for developing effective relationships with others in the work context and, where necessary, how to end relationships which are no longer of use.
- 6 How to make active use of the information and resources gained through personal networks.
- 7 The principles of confidentiality, and how to develop guidelines for exchanging information between individuals and organisations.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 Industry/sector legislation, requirements, regulations, policies and professional codes that are relevant to networking and confidentiality of information.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

- 1 Your own values, motivations and emotions, and the effect of these on your own actions.
- 2 Your own interests and how these may conflict with the interests of others.
- 3 Your own objectives in developing your personal networks.
- 4 Your current and likely future needs for information and resources.
- 5 Your knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and experience.
- 6 People and organisations that can support your work, and vice versa.
- 7 The range of information and resources people may need.
- 8 People and organisations in your current personal networks.