

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT

Three Essential Skills for a Mental Health Support Worker

Student Name: Aliya Zahoor

Student ID: 2516585

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Skill 1: Communication

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

- Builds trust and helps understand a service user's needs, feelings and preferences.
- Clear communication supports safe, person-centred care.

EXAMPLE AT WORK

- Listen actively to a distressed service user and explain support clearly.
- Share important observations with nurses or other professionals.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Practise active listening, complete communication training and ask a supervisor for feedback.

Skill 2: Compassion & Empathy

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

- Helps service users feel respected, valued and supported.
- Supports dignity, privacy, choice and person-centred care.

EXAMPLE AT WORK

- Listen without judgement when a person discusses their mental health.
- Offer reassurance and respect the person's choices and preferences.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Practise empathy, learn from service-user experiences and reflect on interactions with feedback.

Skill 3: Teamwork & Problem-Solving

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

- Healthcare support workers work closely with wider healthcare teams.
- Good teamwork and communication help provide safe, coordinated care.

EXAMPLE AT WORK

- Share relevant changes in a service user's behaviour with the care team.
- Work with colleagues to respond appropriately when needs change.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Take part in team activities, practise healthcare scenarios and learn from experienced colleagues.

Three Strategies to Develop My Skills

1. TRAINING

- Complete relevant Care Certificate/communication and compassion training.

2. PRACTICE & EXPERIENCE

- Use volunteering, placements or role-play to practise communication, empathy and teamwork.

3. FEEDBACK & REFLECTION

- Ask supervisors/peers for feedback and reflect on what went well and what I can improve.

Conclusion

- Communication helps me understand and support service users safely.
- Compassion and empathy help me provide respectful, person-centred care.
- Teamwork and problem-solving help me work effectively with other professionals.
- I can develop these skills through training, practical experience and regular feedback.

Harvard-Style References

NHS England (2023) Your questions answered: a guide to becoming a healthcare support worker. Available at: [england.nhs.uk](https://www.england.nhs.uk) (Accessed: 19 August 2026).

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