

Welcome to Academic Skills!

LCLM4001 Academic Skills

Week 8



Remembering last week

We learnt:

- How style differs between types of communication
- Features of appropriate style in business and academic communication
- What coherence and cohesion are in writing
- How to improve this in our own writing

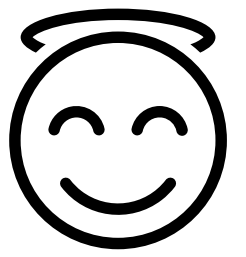
Why this matters:

- Clear writing helps the reader understand your ideas easily
- Professional style makes your communication more effective in business and academic contexts
- Coherence and cohesion improve the flow and structure of your writing
- Strong communication skills support success in future study and the workplace



From last week to this week

- Work in pairs.
- Discuss:
 - How does academic and business style differ from informal communication?
 - Why is coherence important when writing a paragraph?
 - How does cohesion help the reader understand your ideas?
- You do not need details.
- Just key ideas.



What today is about

Understanding what makes spoken communication effective in business and academic contexts

Noticing how voice, body language, and language choice affect an audience

Practising clear, confident speaking in short professional situations

Focusing on the speaker, not slides or presentation tools

What makes spoken communication effective?



Speaking is not the same as writing

- Writing can be re-read
- Speaking happens in real time
- Listeners cannot pause or rewind
- When we speak, we need to be clear and organised.



Audience, clarity, and structure

- Effective spoken communication needs:
 - Awareness of the audience
 - Clear language
 - Simple structure
- Even short spoken messages need:
 - a clear starting point
 - a main idea
 - a clear ending

Helping the listener

- The key goal when speaking
- Your main job as a speaker is to help the listener.
- That means:
 - being clear rather than clever
 - guiding rather than overwhelming
 - thinking about how your message sounds to them

**Good speaking is
about making things
easy to follow**



Discussion: Helping the listener

- Work in groups of three.
- Discuss the questions below:
 - Think of a time when it was hard to follow someone speaking. What made it difficult?
 - What does a speaker do that helps you listen and understand?
 - Which do you think matters most when speaking:
 - Voice
 - body language
 - language choice
 - Why?
- Be ready to share one idea.

Good and bad presentation practices





Watching a speaking example

- You will watch two short presentations by the same student.
- The first presentation is less effective
- The second presentation shows clear improvement
- The improvement comes from feedback, practice, and audience awareness
- Your task is to notice what changes and how those changes affect the listener.



Quick discussion

- Work in pairs.
- Discuss:
 - One thing that made the first presentation harder to follow
 - One thing that improved in the second presentation
- Focus on speaking choices, not confidence or personality.



Watch again and notice changes

- This time, focus more closely on:
 - Voice: pace, volume, pauses
 - Body language: posture, movement, eye contact
 - Clarity: structure, signposting, key points
 - Connection: how the speaker engages the audience
- Make short notes.

Set up your notes now

- What changed?
- First presentation
 - Voice: _____
 - Body language: _____
 - Clarity: _____
- Second presentation
 - Voice: _____
 - Body language: _____
 - Clarity: _____



What helps or hinders spoken communication?



- You noticed different speaking behaviours in the video.
- Now we will look at these behaviours one by one.
- Use Vevox to decide:
 - Does this behaviour help the listener?
 - Or does it make listening harder?
- There are no right answers.
- What matters is your judgement and reasoning.



What helps spoken communication?

- You have noticed different speaking behaviours.
- Now we will use Vevox to agree on the key principles that help the listener.
- There are no right answers.
- We are building a shared understanding.

Break time!

See you in 10 minutes 😊



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Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
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Signposting language



It's not just how you stand - it's what you say

- In the video, posture and confidence change.
- But so does language.
- Clear speakers signal where they are going
- Signposting helps the listener follow ideas
- Without signposting, even confident speakers can be hard to follow
- Good spoken communication uses language to guide the listener.





Signposting language when speaking

- You will use the worksheet in front of you.

Your task

- Work in pairs
- Match each group of language to its purpose
- One example is already done for you → 1=A
- Focus on:
 - what the speaker is doing with the language
 - how the language helps the listener follow ideas



Signposting Answers

**Choose signposting
based on purpose,
not habit.**

Structuring Spoken Messages



Structuring what you say

- Even short spoken messages need structure.
- A simple spoken structure is:
 - **Opening** – tell the listener what you're about to talk about
 - **Key point** – the main idea
 - **Example** or short story – to make it clear
 - **Close** – remind the listener why it matters
- This structure helps the listener follow you.

I'd like to briefly talk about a small **issue** in our team meetings.

The main **problem** is that **meetings** often run **longer** than planned.

For **example**, last week's meeting was scheduled for 30 minutes but went on for nearly an hour because the agenda wasn't clear.

This **matters** because it affects people's time and focus, so **improving** meeting structure would help the team work more efficiently



Thinking before speaking

- Choose a card. It contains a scenario
- Work individually for a few minutes.
- You do not need full sentences.
- Keywords or short notes are enough.
- Plan what you will say using this structure:
 - Opening – what are you talking about?
 - Key point – what is the main message?
 - Example – what short example will help?
 - Close – why does this matter?



Speaking and listening

- Work in pairs.
 - Speak for 30–45 seconds
 - Use the structure you planned
 - You do not need to memorise anything
 - Then swap roles.
- The listener:
 - focuses on whether the message was easy to follow
 - does not interrupt



What helped you as a listener?

- Use Vevox to answer the questions.
- Your answers are anonymous.
- Focus on what helped you follow the message, not on confidence or content.



Body language and voice



Body language supports your message

- When you speak, listeners also respond to:
 - how you stand
 - where you look
 - how you hold your body
 - how steady you appear
- Body language does not replace words.
- It supports them
- Helpful body language when speaking:
 - Standing in a balanced, open position
 - Facing the listener
 - Natural eye contact
 - Limited, purposeful movement
- Small changes make a noticeable difference.



Body language and voice practice

- We will now experiment with how body language and voice affect the listener.
- You will:
 - say the same message twice
 - change how you say it, not what you say
- This is about noticing impact, not performance.

Paired rehearsal

- Work with your partner.
- Say your 30 second message using poor posture and voice
- Say the same message again, using improved posture and voice
- Then discuss:
 - how it felt to speak
 - how it felt to listen



Reflection with your partner

- Discuss:
 - which version was easier to listen to
 - what specifically made the difference
- Focus on voice and body language, not confidence.

Break time!

See you in 10 minutes 😊



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Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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Low-pressure speaking practice





Speaking practice without slides

- You will now practise speaking in small groups.
- This is not a presentation.
- It is short, practical speaking.
- You will:
 - speak for 30 to 45 seconds
 - use a clear structure
 - focus on clarity and delivery
- Listeners focus on how easy it is to follow, not on content.



How the speaking rounds work

- How it works
 - Work in groups of three or four
 - Each person speaks once
 - Use one of the prepared scenarios
 - Use the structure you practised
 - Listen respectfully
- After each speaker:
 - listeners briefly share what helped them follow the message



After your group finishes

- Think quietly about:
 - what made messages easier to follow
 - which speaking choices helped the listener most
- We will reflect on this next.





Explaining your speaking choices

- Work in pairs.
- Take turns to explain:
 - One speaking choice you made
 - Why you think it helped the audience
 - One thing you changed after listening or feedback
- You are reflecting on choices, not judging performance.

Task 3: A Mini-Presentation about Sources

- Choose a business topic from the 2 provided
- Find one good academic source for this topic
- Evaluate the source using the template provided
- Create a short 5 minute recorded presentation, including a brief reflection on what you found difficult and what you learnt while completing this task

You should choose **one** of the following two business topics:

Topic 1: The use of social media to promote businesses

Topic 2: Importance of customer service for business success

PLEASE NOTE: Use of the BBC text from Task 1 is **NOT** allowed. You must find your **OWN** source.



Task 3: Discuss & Brainstorm

Discuss with a partner which topic you will choose

Ask each other:

- How much do you already know about this topic?
- What interests you about this topic?
- What kind of sources do you think would help you research this topic?



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Recap



Today we learnt:

- Understanding what makes spoken communication effective

- Noticing how voice, posture, and language affect the listener

- Using signposting language to guide an audience

- Structuring short spoken messages without slides

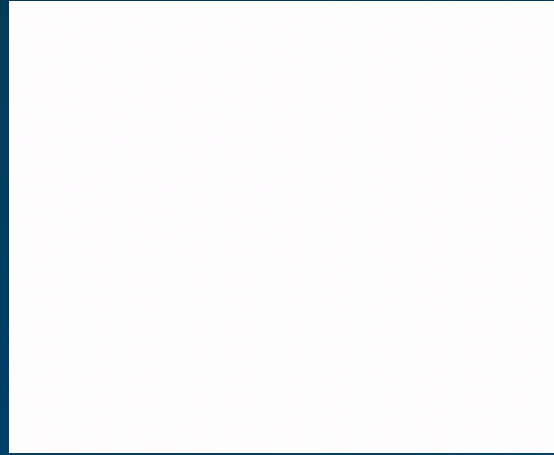
- Practising speaking in a low pressure way

- Reflecting on choices that help listeners follow ideas

Good speaking is not about confidence or performance.



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Next Week: Reflection and Professional Development





Homework for Week 9

**Home
work**

- Start searching for a Task 3 source
- Make notes on the Evaluation Template to bring to class next week (the template does not need to be complete! Just make sure you have started)