



Social Skills

What Are Social Skills?

- Social skills provide the means with which we navigate the social world around us.
- They are skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and our appearance.
- If we have good social skills then this can help us become confident, happy people who are easy to get along with, and the good news is:
 - Social skills can be taught, practiced and learned.

For children & adults on the autism spectrum, social skills are rarely learnt by absorbing knowledge through exposure to them – they have to be explicitly taught.

Developing Your Social Skills Is All About:

- Being aware of how you communicate with others both professionally and personally.
- The different messages that you send out, how they impact others and affect your relationships.
- How your methods of communication can be improved to connect with others more effectively.

Tick the boxes in each section to identify where you could benefit from making some improvements:

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The skills you use when talking to other people, making conversation, 'small talk', using humour:

- Verbal Skills – good clear confident voice, being aware of a range in tone and pace, also the effect of accents.
- Non-verbal skills – this is body language, gestures, posture, personal space, eye contact and facial expressions.
- Listening Skills – active listening is with your whole body, showing interest and totally attentive

BASIC INTERACTION

Self-responsibility:

- Taking care of yourself – personal grooming, posture awareness, personal safety
- Being accountable for your behavior and obligations;
- Choosing between right and wrong.
- Doing what is right for you when with a group.
- Admit to mistakes you make.
- Understand it is important to follow through on commitments you have made.
- Have control over your own personal goals/future

TEAM BUILDING SKILLS

Accepting Differences:

- Treating people who are different to you with respect.
- Work, play & have friendships with people who are different to you.

Work related social Skills:

- Work out problems when they are given to you, ask for help and be willing to involve others if required.
- Be able to follow instructions, ask questions appropriately.
- Contribute as a member of a team, participating, offer help & encourage others.
- Accept your responsibility for doing a job.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Social interactions do not always run smoothly. Conflict resolution skills include:

- Assertiveness or being able to say what you are feeling without being aggressive or getting personal.
- Disagree with the idea and not the person.
- Negotiation skills: being able to discuss a conflict calmly and rationally and then come to an agreement about a solution.

Better Relationships:

There is significant correlation between your social skills and your success in any area of life. With good social skills it is easier to make friends, build strong relationships and get ahead in your job or career.



Also, those with good social skills are naturally more popular which means they have better support to call on when experiencing difficulties in their lives. They get more social reinforcement (messages from other people that they are worthwhile and okay), so they tend to have better self-esteem, which can then help them through tough times.

These are some of the benefits of having good social skills:

Building and Maintaining Friendships:

There are many skills involved in making and sustaining friendships. For example:

- Approach skills: being able to start talking to someone who you don't know or don't know well.
- Sharing decision making: not always insisting on having your own way but negotiating about what to do, where to go, etc.
- Showing appropriate affection and appreciation.
- Maintaining contact: not expecting the other person to "do all the work" of keeping up the friendship.
- Being supportive: showing concern when your friend is having a hard time.
- Allowing distance and closeness: people do need time apart as well as together.
- Thoughtfulness: "thinking ahead" about what might be a nice thing to do for your friend.



Advancing Career Prospects:

- Having the confidence to start a conversation in a work-related environment may lead to new job opportunities, maybe also with a better salary.
- Most management or supervisor/team leader jobs have a 'people component' often involving a large amount of time spent interacting with employees, colleagues or even the media, all of which require effective social skills.
- It is rare that an individual can isolate themselves in their office and still excel in their job.
- Most organisations are looking for individuals with the ability to work well in a team and to influence and motivate people to get things done.



Increased Overall Happiness:

- Getting along and understanding people will help to open many personal and career-related doors.
- A smile and 'hello' in a social situation may lead to a friendship being formed. Your social skills are a range of collective skills to help you get along with other people.
- Often you take your social skills for granted, without realising all the complicated skills you do use when you interact with others.
 - Some of these skills are very basic and simple, like saying hello and good-bye, or smiling and making eye contact when you see someone you know.
 - Others are more complex, like the skills you use to negotiate in a situation of conflict with somebody.



As your social skills build, you'll find yourself feeling more confident in social settings and connecting easier with others.

Your Social Skills Assessment Wheel: Review, Score & Plan Your Personal Action

Use your social skills interactive assessment to help you identify the area(s) relevant to you



Review each section of the Social Skills Wheel and then give yourself a score for each from 1 to 5.
Which areas could be improved to help enhance your social skills?

KEY SOCIAL SKILLS These can be learnt	SCORE 1=Low 5 = High	ACTION I WILL TAKE & DATE BY
Communication Skills		
Team Building Skills		
Dealing with Conflict		
Building Friendships		
Ability to Show Empathy		
Self-responsibility		
Able to accept Differences		
Listening Skills		

Top Tips to Help Boost Your Social Skills

- **Cooperation** – playing your part in a positive way, e.g. taking turns, doing your part of a shared task.
- **Being a friend** - there are many levels of friendship,
- **Sharing** – like treats, belongings and ideas with others
- **Accepting differences** - every person is unique and special and we all have feelings.
- **Participation** - joining in and 'giving it a go' even if you are not very good at something.
- **Being patient** – everyone needs to learn patience and wait for his or her turn.
- **Helping others** - so that the job gets done or someone can feel cared about.
- **Staying on task** - getting your own job done and not stopping others from doing theirs.
- **Listening** - learning to be an 'active listener'.
- **Praising others** and not using 'put downs'. Letting people know when they have done well and not being mean when they haven't.
- **Positive communication and interaction** - if you are nice to others then they are usually nice to you. Shouting and bullying may get attention but won't win friends.
- **Being polite and courteous** - saying hello to people you know, visitors and family friends.
- **Using good manners** when talking, eating or in public.
- **Respecting ourselves, others and property**, and accepting responsibility for what you say or do. This includes being honest and truthful.
- **Resolving conflicts** when you have a problem with someone or they have a problem

