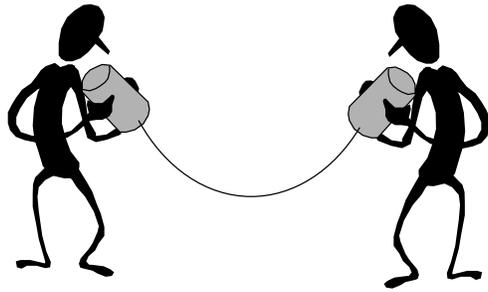


# MAKING COMMUNICATION HAPPEN



## TOOLS TO HELP TEAMS PLAN AND PROVIDE COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS

Created by  
The Vermont Communication Task Force  
Version 2

Spring 2003  
(updated 5/08)

**Making Communication Happen:**  
**Tools to Help Teams Plan and Provide Communication Supports**  
**Version 3**  
**Spring 2003**  
(Updated 5/08)

Members of the Vermont Communication Taskforce are available to offer training, consultation or guidance to people receiving support, their families and friends, case managers and support staff.

For more information, contact:  
The Vermont Communication Taskforce  
c/o The Division of Disability and Aging Services  
Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1601  
Phone: 802 241-2648  
Fax: 802 241-4224  
Website: [www.dail.vermont.gov](http://www.dail.vermont.gov)

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The most important principles for supporting people to communicate have little to do with equipment or elaborate instructional techniques.

They are the attitudes and skills of the people they are talking with:  
their communication partners.

The more supportive a communication partner is of a person's efforts to communicate, the more effective that person will be.

- Mirenda

*Do you support someone with a developmental disability who doesn't speak?*

*Do you know someone who has a lot to say but limited ways to say it?*

*Are you constantly guessing what someone you care about really wants?*

*Do you ever wish that someone you work with could just tell you what's on his mind?*

*Do you want to find better ways to help someone express herself?*

**If any of these apply to you...these tools may be of help!**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Communication is wholly tied to decision-making, to social interaction, to literacy, and to being in command of one's environment and personal relationships. For individuals with a significant communication disability, the effort to improve and expand upon whatever communication strategies they use should be an ongoing initiative for their circle of support. This booklet contains a collection of tools that can be helpful in the planning and providing of communication supports.

All people who receive developmental services funding<sup>1</sup> must have an Individual Support Agreement (ISA). Specific information about how a person communicates and ways that others can help him/her communicate must be included in the person's ISA.

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception of people getting Flexible Family Funding only.

Minimally, each ISA needs to address the following two questions<sup>2</sup>:

**1. Describe how you communicate with others.**

*What should others know about how you communicate in order to understand you and help you understand others? Is there a best way to provide information to you so that you understand the information? Tell others what they need to know about how you communicate to best understand you. For example, some people need time to think before answering a question. Some people need more time to say everything that they want to say. Some people communicate by talking, others may use a device or facilitated communication; others may sign; some may use eye contact.*

This is a clear description of how the person communicates, even if the person is a fluent communicator without any communication support needs. Answering this question may involve the development of a Communication Plan that describes how the person is best supported to communicate. The person's Communication Plan may be written directly into this section of the ISA or included as an attachment<sup>3</sup>.

**2. Do you have a need to increase your ability to communicate?"**

*Communication is tied to making decisions, to interacting with others, to letting others know how you feel, what you want and what you don't want – to being in charge of your life. Do you need to increase your ability to communicate?*

If the person has *any* communication needs, whether they are currently being addressed or not, those needs must be mentioned in this section of the ISA. If the person has absolutely no communication needs, that must be noted. If the person needs to increase or improve his/her ability to communicate, the team may decide to identify a communication outcome in the ISA<sup>4</sup> that states how the person's life will change as a result of supports. If an outcome is identified, there needs to be a description of the agreed upon support strategies that will assist the person to achieve the outcome<sup>5</sup>; and the indicators<sup>6</sup> that let the team know that the person has achieved the outcome or is at least moving in the right direction. There also needs to be some indication of how this information<sup>7</sup> is gathered (e.g., data, written note, videotape, calendar), how often, and who is responsible for doing this.

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<sup>2</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #11, Page 17, March 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #13, Page 18, March 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #1, Page 11, March 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #2, Page 13, March 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #3, Page 14, March 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Individual Support Agreement Guidelines, B. Supports Received, #4, Page 14, March 2003.

Enclosed are three tools to help the person and his/her team to plan and provide communication supports:

1. **Communication Plan:** Identify and define how the person communicates and how best to support him/her to communicate
2. **Communication Checklist:** Assess the person's communication skills and needs
3. **Communication Outcomes & Support Strategies:** Identify outcomes (goals) to work toward and the best ways to do it

Success in life  
can be  
directly related  
to the ability  
to communicate.

- ASHA

## COMMUNICATION PLAN

If a person has *any* communication needs, it is important to have a **Communication Plan** included in his/her ISA. The **Communication Plan** is an independent document that is not necessarily tied to an outcome, but provides in-depth information about how a person currently communicates. A person who has a **Communication Plan** may or may not have a **Communication Outcome**.

The purpose of a **Communication Plan** is to provide a description of the different ways a person communicates across the various settings in his/her life (e.g., home, work, community), and the supports that are needed to enable the person to use his/her mode of communication. The **Communication Plan** will provide all people in a person's life with the information they need to effectively support the person to communicate. It can also be a way for new people in a person's life to learn how to interact with the person. Regular and consistent use of a good **Communication Plan** promotes communication and expands the development of new skills.

Some elements that may be included in the person's **Communication Plan** include:

- *A communication dictionary of a person's gestures, signs, verbal expressions and what they mean.*
- *Useful strategies for the communication partner to support the person in using his/her communication modes – what helps the person to communicate best; what inhibits or limits a person's communication.*
- *If the person uses Facilitated Communication, a description of the methods of support used by the individual.*
- *Description of which modes the person uses in different environments.*
- *Instructions on how to operate the person's communication device.*
- *Videotape showing the person having a successful conversation/ or interaction with someone who knows them well.*

The person's **Communication Plan** may be written directly into the ISA or included as an attachment to the ISA. The **Communication Plan Form** that is provided on the next page is optional, but it may help the person and his/her team to think about how best to create a plan and relate the information to others.

**Technology and Augmentative Communication**

**Systems can be very powerful,**

**but they are useless**

**in enabling people to realize their potential**

**without appropriate training**

**and a supportive environment.**

**- Linda Burkhart**

# COMMUNICATION PLAN FORM

Name:

Date:

*Only complete sections that apply.*

## People Completing the Plan:

1. **Attach Communication Dictionary** – date completed/updated \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Useful Strategies for the communication partner to support the person in using their communication modes.**
3. **If the person uses Facilitated Communication, a description of the methods of support used by the individual (i.e., physical, communicative & emotional).**
4. **Description of which modes the person uses in different environments.**
  - At home –
  - On the job-
  - In the community-
5. **Instructions on how to operate the person’s communication device include battery-charging instructions if applicable.**
6. **Videotape showing the person having a successful conversation or interaction with someone who knows them well.**



# COMMUNICATION PLAN SAMPLE

**Name:** Joe Smith

**Date:** 2/2/03

*Only complete sections that apply.*

**People Completing the Plan:** Linda Evans, sister; Dave Bearman, job coach; Frank & Edith Adams, home providers; Sue Turner, service coordinator

1. **Attach Communication Dictionary** – date completed/updated 1/03
2. **Useful Strategies for the communication partner to support the person in using his/her communication modes.**
  - If asked about basic, everyday information and Joe is not responding verbally and has confused expression on his face, encourage him to speak (e.g., “I know you can say the words”).
  - Don’t assume he can’t speak.
  - Provide lots of positive encouragement.
  - If the speaking requires multi-syllable words or more in-depth/complex information, offer use of FC.
  - Provide written choices if Joe is having trouble responding verbally (e.g., Write down and say the names of the three restaurant choices rather than just saying them to him).
  - Encourage eye contact.
  - Joe needs people to “stay with him” in a warm supportive way so he knows you are available to hear what he has to say.
  - The amount Joe speaks depends on whom he is with and where he is. Joe is most talkative with familiar people in comfortable situations
3. **If the person uses Facilitated Communication, a description of the methods of support used by the individual (i.e., physical, communicative & emotional).**
  - Joe sometimes needs extra prompting to start typing. He responds better when you are clear and firm about when it is time to use his communication device.
  - Type out your questions/comments so Joe can read what you are saying during your conversation.
  - Joe benefits from regular verbal encouragement when typing. Be positive. If he is typing, do not pressure him to use speech. Joe finds it easier to just focus on typing when using FC.
  - Joe’s spoken words are reliable when he is typing.
4. **Description of which modes the person uses in different environments.**

**At home** – speech- most talkative with familiar people  
**On the job-** gestures/body movements most with some speech  
**In the community-** gestures/body movements most with some speech

**5. Instructions on how to operate the person's communication device include battery-charging instructions if applicable.**

- Joe has an Alphasmart for typing. See manual for detailed instructions.
- Should not be used in environments with water e.g. at the pool
- Uses 3 AA lithium batteries (back-up batteries are in the case)

**6. Videotape showing the person having a successful conversation or interaction with someone who knows them well.**

N/A

## COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

If the person and his/her team identify communication as a need, the **Communication Checklist** is a tool that can help pinpoint and explore the person's communicative strengths and needs. Using the **Checklist** can facilitate productive thinking, discussion and planning to create outcomes that will have meaning in a person's everyday life.

The **Checklist** can help the person and his/her team to think of specific ways to build upon and enlarge the person's communication repertoire, such as being able to:

- *Order a pizza*
- *Request a raise at work*
- *Make a new friend at the dance*
- *Say, "No, thanks!"*
- *Tell a cherished relative or friend "I love you"*

Think of the **Checklist** as a way to find out not only the person's needs, but also what are his/her strengths. For example, look at what might make the most difference in the person's life, or be the most successful based on what the person already knows how to do.

It is helpful for the service coordinator or other key support person to work with the individual and his/her team to collect this information, and to update it when needed. Comparing **Checklist** results from year-to-year may show trends. It is most effective when the entire team fills out the 4-page **Checklist**, using it as a springboard for discussion regarding where the person is most and least effective at communicating. This should lead to developing specific outcomes and a concrete plan that will enhance the person's ability to communicate in real-life situations.

The **Checklist** provides a series of questions for the person and his/her team to think about and discuss. The team may even want to add additional questions to consider. An important element of the **Checklist** is that it promotes conversation and collaboration among team members. Pick just one or two things to work on based on those discussions and go from there.

Give a person a message  
and s/he communicates for a day.

Teach a person language  
and s/he communicates for a lifetime.

## COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST FORM

Name of Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Completing the Form: \_\_\_\_\_  
 List of Contributing Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this checklist is to assist an individual and their team with identifying specific needs for communication so that an appropriate plan can be developed within their ISA to meet these needs. This is critical information to be collected or updated as needed by the service coordinator with assistance from the person and team members.

Background information	Response	Comments
1. List the mode(s) of communication the person currently uses (e.g., speech, gestures, sign language, AAC system such as communication board or electronic device, eye gaze, facilitated communication, etc.).		
2. Which type of communication does the person use most frequently?		
3. Which type is, or could be, the most effective for the person and why?		

Evaluation	Response	Comments
4. Does the person have a current communication evaluation?	Yes / No	
5. Are the recommendations from that evaluation still relevant to the person's needs (i.e., a new evaluation is not needed)?	Yes / No	

Basic Information	All the Time	Some of the Time	Rarely/ None of the Time	Comments
6. Can the person communicate everyday choices and needs?				
7. Can the person participate in the making of decisions about his/her life, particularly in the development of his/her ISA?				
8. Can the person use their communication socially (e.g., have conversations with others, participate in group activities)?				
9. Can the person communicate thoughts and feelings to others?				
10. Can the person use his/her communication to share information with others (e.g., tell a personal story)?				
11. Can the person communicate effectively with <u>familiar</u> people?				
12. Can the person communicate effectively with <u>unfamiliar</u> people?				
13. Can the person communicate effectively in a variety of settings, such as home, community, work, school, etc?				
14. Does the person receive regular instruction and practice in developing his/her communication skills?				
15. Have there been clear strategies, techniques, and methods of support identified to assist the person with his/her communication?				

<b>Team Support</b>	<b>All the Time</b>	<b>Some of the Time</b>	<b>Rarely/ None of the Time</b>	<b>Comments</b>
16. Is there commitment to work on communication by all members of the team?				
17. Do members of the person's team have similar goals and ideas about what is important to work on in terms of communication skills?				
18. Have all members of the person's team, including family members, been included in the planning for communication?				
19. Are there multiple communication partners who can provide support and instruction in the use of the person's communication system?				
20. Do these partners have sufficient training to assist the person in using his/her system and devices?				
21. Do these communication partners and members of the team have access to support and technical assistance from people with AAC expertise?				

<b>Communication Aids and Devices</b>	<b>All the Time</b>	<b>Some of the Time</b>	<b>Rarely/ None of the Time</b>	<b>Comments</b>
22. Does the person have the appropriate aids and devices they need to communicate?				
23. Are the aids/devices in working order and programmed on a regular basis to keep pace with the person's changing needs?				
24. Does the person have regular access to aids and devices?				
25. Is there a team member (s) who has the responsibility for maintaining and programming of the devices?				
26. Are there sufficient financial resources to pay for aids and devices? Training? SLP/AAC follow-up?				

Checklist adapted from: McCarthy, Claire F., et. al. (1998). *Communication Supports Checklist for Programs Serving Individuals with Severe Disabilities*. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brooks Publishing Co.

## COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST SAMPLE

Name of Person: **Joe Smith**

Person Completing Form: **Sue Turner, Service Coordinator**

List of Contributing Team Members: **Linda Evans, sister; Dave Bearman, job coach  
Frank & Edith Adams, home providers; Joe Smith**

Agency: **Deep Valley County**

Date: **December 5, 2002**

The purpose of this checklist is to assist an individual and their team with identifying specific needs for communication so that an appropriate plan can be developed within their ISA to meet these needs. This is critical information to be collected at least annually by the case manager/service coordinator with assistance from the person and team members.

Background information	Response	Comments
1. List the mode(s) of communication the person currently uses (e.g., speech, gestures, sign language, AAC system such as communication board or electronic device, eye gaze, facilitated communication, etc.).	<b>Speech, gestures, facial expressions and facilitated communication</b>	
2. Which type of communication does the person use most frequently?	<b>Speech</b>	
3. Which type is, or could be, the most effective for the person and why?	<b>Speech for wants and needs, simple social interactions; facilitated communication for expressing thoughts and feelings, engaging in in-depth conversation.</b>	<b>Joe also uses facial expressions and gestures effectively</b>

Evaluation	Response	Comments
4. Does the person have a current communication evaluation?	<b>Evaluation was done 3 years ago.</b>	
5. Are the recommendations from that evaluation still relevant to the person's needs (i.e., a new evaluation is not needed)?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Good recommendations for strategies for increasing initiation of speech</b>

Basic Information	All the Time	Some of the Time	Rarely/ None of the Time	Comments
6. Can the person communicate everyday choices and needs?		x		Often does not initiate requests and will wait to be asked.
7. Can the person participate in the making of decisions about his/her life, particularly in the development of his/her ISA?	x			If Joe uses FC, can contribute significantly to his ISA plan
8. Can the person use their communication socially (e.g., have conversations with others, participate in group activities)?		x		In most social situations, Joe uses his speech but usually does not initiate interactions
9. Can the person communicate thoughts and feelings to others?		x		Joe needs to use FC to communicate in-depth thoughts and feelings
10. Can the person use his/her communication to share information with others (e.g., tell a personal story)?		x		Joe can share basic info about a personal experience verbally and more in-depth info with FC
11. Can the person communicate effectively with <u>familiar</u> people?		x		With familiar people who have high expectations and offer lots of encouragement
12. Can the person communicate effectively with <u>unfamiliar</u> people?			x	Joe lacks confidence with unfamiliar people so will not communicate much
13. Can the person communicate effectively in a variety of settings, such as home, community, work, school, etc?		x		Joe has difficulty communicating effectively with people at work
14. Does the person receive regular instruction and practice in developing his/her communication skills?		x		Gets a lot of informal instruction and practice at work and in the community
15. Have there been clear strategies, techniques, and methods of support identified to assist the person with his/her communication?	x			Both for speech and FC

<b>Team Support</b>	<b>All the Time</b>	<b>Some of the Time</b>	<b>Rarely/ None of the Time</b>	<b>Comments</b>
16. Is there commitment to work on communication by all members of the team?	x			
17. Do members of the person's team have similar goals and ideas about what is important to work on in terms of communication skills?		x		<b>Similar for speech but not for FC - team members vary in their understanding of Joe's language capabilities</b>
18. Have all members of the person's team, including family members, been included in the planning for communication?	x			
19. Are there multiple communication partners who can provide support and instruction in the use of the person's communication system?		x		<b>Limited in home setting</b>
20. Do these partners have sufficient training to assist the person in using his/her system and devices?		x		
21. Do these communication partners and members of the team have access to support and technical assistance from people with AAC expertise?	x			<b>From case manager; could use some follow-up from communication specialist</b>

<b>Communication Aids and Devices</b>	<b>All the Time</b>	<b>Some of the Time</b>	<b>Rarely/ None of the Time</b>	<b>Comments</b>
22. Does the person have the appropriate aids and devices they need to communicate?		<b>x</b>		<b>Joe uses Alphasmart for FC; explore voice output devices</b>
23. Are the aids/devices in working order and programmed on a regular basis to keep pace with the person's changing needs?	<b>x</b>			
24. Does the person have regular access to aids and devices?		<b>x</b>		<b>Joe does not always carry Alphasmart with him</b>
25. Is there a team member (s) who has the responsibility for maintaining and programming of the devices?	<b>x</b>			<b>Case manager</b>
26. Are there sufficient financial resources to pay for aids and devices? Training? SLP/AAC follow-up?			<b>x</b>	<b>Funding for a device needed</b>

Checklist adapted from: McCarthy, Claire F., et. al. (1998). *Communication Supports Checklist for Programs Serving Individuals with Severe Disabilities*. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brooks Publishing Co.

## COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES/GOALS AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES

If a person and his/her team determine there is a need to increase or improve the person's ability to communicate, the team may decide to identify a **Communication Outcome or Goal** in the ISA that states how the person's quality of life will change as a result of an increase in the supports for communication. When looking at changes in quality of life, it is important to consider the person's use of their communication system within the context of everyday life activities, events and situations that they typically participate in. Does the person's use of their communication system enable them to:

- Function more independently in the activity/event/situation?
- Participate more fully?
- Socially interact more with others?
- Have more control over things happening in their environment?

In an article titled, *Time to Get in the Mix*, from his publication, Alternatively Speaking, Michael Williams, an AAC user and noted advocate for people with communication disabilities, speaks to the importance of focusing on communication happening in everyday, social situations:

*"Communication can't happen in a vacuum. Communication happens in that vital pulsing web of social interactions that is part of most of our daily lives. Whether we are at home, at work or at play, we spend a good part of our day talking to people...Everybody wants to be in the mix. But for those of us with communication disabilities, it's not easy. Whether we have our disabilities at birth or acquire them later in life, communication disabilities have the same effect: they take you out of the mix. You are a spectator, half hidden in the corner. Even if you want back in, you are probably too scared, because communicating when you have a speech disability means taking risks...I have news for you. The only thing keeping you from getting in the mix is your own fear of what you think might happen. Come out of the shadows. Peek around the corner. There's a party going on and you're invited."*

Keeping in mind Michael William's idea of people communicating in the "mix" of everyday life, an outcome/goal will be more meaningful for a person if it not only includes a statement of what skills the person might be learning, e.g. increasing the number of signs or increasing the use of an electronic communication device, but also refer to where the person might be communicating, who they might be communicating with and/or what they might be doing.

An example of an everyday life activity that could be used as a basis for developing a communication outcome/goal is the activity of people going out to eat at a restaurant with friends. People typically communicate a variety of messages doing this including:

- Making a choice about what they want to order
- Giving their order to the counterperson or waiter/waitress
- Engaging in “small talk” with others in the restaurant
- Participating in conversations with friends at their table

For someone who may have recently obtained an electronic voice output device, the restaurant experience has the potential to provide multiple opportunities to learn to use their device in meaningful way. The device could be programmed to not only include choices for food orders but also include messages for social interactions including social greetings and conversational phrases. In this way, a person could learn to communicate with unfamiliar people in the community, interact socially with others in the restaurant and be more independent as they would not necessarily need support people to “translate” for them as their device would allow them to have their own voice.

Looking at this scenario, some potential outcomes/goals that could be developed might be:

- To independently order food in favorite restaurants
- To increase ability to interact with unfamiliar people in the community
- To expand the range of communication messages to include choice making, social greetings and conversational exchanges in community situations

Individuals and their teams will decide how narrow or broad the focus of the outcome/goal will be based on the individual’s preferences and skill levels.

Here are some other sample situations and outcomes/goals:

- **(Work)** *To communicate more effectively with co-workers (e.g., greet people, initiate a conversation at work, consult with his/her employer on an ongoing basis)*
- **(Home)** *To increase ability to have conversations during family social events*
- **(Making social connections)** *To plan a date with a friend or family member (including possible conversations he/she might have with this person)*
- **(Situations of sadness and tragedy)** *To share feelings about a loss in his/her circle of family and friends with someone he/she trusts*

- *(Social situations with friends)* To use a date book or photo album to give and receive personal information in an informal setting
- *(Community settings)* To increase ability to communicate clearly with unfamiliar people
- *(Decision-making situations)* To develop a reliable way to say “NO” when presented with options that may not be desired

A helpful step in the outcome/goal development process is to complete the **Communication Checklist** (see p.11). Information from the checklist will help to pinpoint what specific communication skills to work on with the person. It is often beneficial for the person to choose an item that was rated “Some of the time.” This means the individual is on his/her way to establishing this skill. It is easier to begin with this skill rather than one rated as “Rarely/None of the Time.” Building on this skill provides the person with the opportunity to generalize the skill across more situations in their life and to initiate the use of it if they currently need prompting to do so. For example, if a person can share information with others (#10 on the **Communication Checklist**) some of the time (e.g. with people at home), think about other people and environments outside the home that the person could develop this skill with.

Once the person and his/her team have described a **Communication Outcome/Goal** to be accomplished over the coming year, they will then need to discuss and identify:

- **Support Strategies** to achieve the goal (how it will be done and who will do it);
- **Indicators** that will demonstrate that progress is being made (how you know the strategies are working); and
- **Documentation** that is necessary and who will be responsible for making sure it happens.

The **Support Strategy** section will include information critical to supporting a person to achieve their communication outcome/goal. Examples of information might include a description of:

- Prompts/cues/teaching strategies that will assist a person in using their communication system
- Communication aids and how the person will use them
- Environmental set-up to make communication easier for the person

- Directions for the communication partner on how to involve others in interacting with the person (this would be particularly be important for supporting the person to communicate with others in the community)

This section may also include an outline of actions that team members have to take in order for work on the communication outcome/goal to be effective. Examples of this might include:

- Team members receiving training on the person's communication system
- Obtaining the appropriate aids and devices for the person and dealing with funding issues
- Ensuring that aids/devices are in working order and programmed on a regular basis
- Creating opportunities for the person to use their aids or devices

Additionally, the team may want to incorporate the **Communication Plan** into the **Support Strategies**.

The **Communication Outcome/Goal and Support Strategies Form** that is provided on the next page is optional, but it may help the person and his/her team think about and put together all the information that is needed in the ISA. The person's **Outcome/Goal, Support Strategies, Progress Documentation** may be described in the ISA or included as an attachment to the ISA.

## COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES/GOALS AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES FORM

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Person(s) Responsible for this Outcome:**

**Communication Outcome:** (ISA Question: *What do you expect to be different as a result of supports?*)

**Support Strategies:** (ISA Question: *What are the supports you expect from support people? What will support people do to help you or teach you the strategy?*)

**Indicators:** (ISA Question: *How will you and others know when your expectations are being met?*)

**Information:** (ISA Questions: *What information needs to be gathered, and how often, so you know supports are working? How is this documented? Who is responsible for doing this?*)



# COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES/GOALS AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES SAMPLE

**Name:** Joe Smith

**Date:** 2/4/03

**Person(s) Responsible for this Outcome:** Dave Bearman, job coach; Sue Turner, service coordinator

**Communication Outcome:** (ISA Question: *What do you expect to be different as a result of supports?`) Joe will have more conversations at work including greeting folks and asking for information related to the job.*

**Support Strategies:** (ISA Question: *What are the supports you expect from support people? What will support people do to help you or teach you the strategy?`)*

**Strategy 1:** Use script cards with phrases written on them to use in conversations

1. Observe and ask at job site which phrases will be most useful in greetings and conversations.
2. Develop script cards for identified greetings and conversation – Include any symbols that might be helpful on the cards (e.g., “Hi, how are you?”; “I need some help.”; “Can I take my break?”)
3. Practice reading cards with familiar person to rehearse and get comfortable with them
4. Identify the prompts/cues to help Joe use script cards
  - a. Have the co-worker remind Joe to use the cards
  - b. Support person remind Joe to use the cards
  - c. Gesture to Joe to use his cards

**Strategy 2:** Educating co-workers about Joe’s communication style

1. Develop the Communication Dictionary for Joe
2. Have Joe and support person share Communication Dictionary and what Joe wants to work on in regards to communication with co-workers
3. Explain and demonstrate script cards with co-workers

**Indicators:** (ISA Question: *How will you and others know when your expectations are being met?`)*

1. When Joe comes to work in the morning, he will independently greet people (no prompts from anyone!)
2. When Joe needs help, he will independently ask for it from a co-worker, not the job coach.

**Information:** (ISA Questions: *What information needs to be gathered, and how often, so you know supports are working? How is this documented? Who is responsible for doing this?`)*

1. Dave will keep a weekly note on Joe’s success greeting people and asking for help.
2. Joe will meet with Sue monthly and will share how he feels things are going at his job.



Not  
being able  
to speak  
is not  
the same  
as not  
having  
anything  
to say.

- Anne McDonald

